

Turks cross into Syria to hit rebels

ANKARA (AP) — A military offensive against separatist Kurds has spread into Syria to strike at suspected guerrilla bases, reports said Saturday. Interior Minister Nihat Metin was quoted by the Milliyet newspaper as saying Syria was supporting Turkey's fight against the Kurdish guerrillas, which have waged a nearly 10-year battle for autonomy. But Mr. Metin would only say that troops were conducting operations along the border near the town of Suruc. Milliyet reported that helicopters carried soldiers inside Syria. There were no immediate details about the offensive. Turkey and Syria share a 877-kilometre (526 miles) border. Turkey has pressed Syria to extradite PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan, who lives in Damascus. The two countries have increased talks over the issue lately.

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Disident says Kikhia in Tripoli

CAIRO (AP) — The main disident group opposed to Muammar Qadhafi said Saturday it has learned from people in Tripoli that a missing former foreign minister is being held in the Libyan capital. Spokesman Mohammad Gibril of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya revealed no evidence to support his claim on the whereabouts of Mansour R. Kikhia. But he told the Associated Press: "Our sources in Tripoli assured us he is there. They might have heard him; they might have seen him; he is there." Mr. Kikhia's Syrian-born American wife, Baha Omary, ended a four-day visit to Cairo on Saturday during which she met President Hosni Mubarak's top political adviser, Osama Al-Baz. "The Egyptian government showed her the process of investigation and assured her they are doing their best," Mr. Gibril said. "The Egyptians are embarrassed because Kikhia's disappearance took them by surprise."

Balladour in Riyadh

RIYADH (AFP) — French Prime Minister Edouard Balladour arrived here Saturday for talks with King Fahd that French sources hope will pave the way for billions of dollars in trade and defence contracts with Saudi Arabia. Mr. Balladour, along with Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, Defence Minister Francois Leotard and Industry Minister Gerard Longueval, was to sign a framework accord on commercial and military ties, the business and government sources said. They were also to speak with King Fahd about security in the Gulf, the war in Bosnia and Saudi support for an economic aid programme for Algeria requested by the International Monetary Fund.

Clinton's mother's funeral draws many

HOT SPRING (AP) — Hundreds of mourners, from neighbours to friends to top administration officials to entertainers, gathered to pay tribute to Barbara Streisand, where President Clinton in paying final respects to his mother Saturday. After the morning funeral for Virginia Kelley, the president was joining a procession for the 145 km drive to his birthplace of Hope, where Mrs. Kelley was being buried among the graves of other family members. Mr. Clinton was expected to return to Washington late Saturday night to begin a scheduled 10-day European trip.

Top Muslim cleric murdered in Algeria

ALGERIA (AFP) — The religious leader of the Muslim community in the Medea region near here was assassinated by a group of armed men after a prayer meeting, Algerian radio said Saturday. Director of Religious Affairs Mohammed Belattene, 62, was gunned down Friday in this region 90 kilometres south of the capital, the radio said, without giving further details. He is the second religious leader to be murdered in the last month. On Dec. 8, Abdul Kader Chias, director of religious affairs in the eastern Constantine region, was shot dead as he left a mosque.

Russians launch crucial rocket

MOSCOW (AP) — A Russian rocket with three cosmonauts aboard blasted off from a snowy launch pad Saturday, heading for the Mir orbiting space station 370 kilometres above the surface of the Earth. The troubled Russian space programme has a lot riding on the mission, the 15th since the "Mir" was launched in 1986. "This is definitely one of the most critical flights in a long time because of doubts about their capabilities," Houston-based space expert James Oberger said in a telephone interview. The launch, delayed by two months because of a shortage of booster rockets, apparently went off without a hitch at 1:05 p.m. (10:05 GMT).



جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية والرأي

House committee approves budget with minor changes

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Finance Committee at the Lower House of Parliament Saturday approved the 1994 draft budget after introducing minor amendments that mainly propose cutting current expenditure and deleting references to the controversial sales tax.

The committee recommended that the House reduce by JD 6.5 million the estimated JD 128 million current expenditure for 1994 and argued that it was unconstitutional to include references to the proposed sales tax in the draft budget law before the tax is endorsed by the legislature.

The proposed cut in current expenditure is a "symbolic (one and) aims at having the government watch laxity in controlling expenditures," the committee said in its report to the House.

The government presented

the JD 1.487 billion draft budget to the House on Dec. 13. Finance Minister Sami Gammoh described it as the first "deficit-free" budget in the history of the Kingdom.

The budget targets a growth of "no less" than 5.5 per cent in fixed prices in the gross domestic product (GDP) and aims at curbing inflation at 4.5 per cent.

In its report, which was read out by its rapporteur Deputy Sa'd Hayel Srour, the Finance Committee said the draft budget was compiled in a "balanced" way.

But it criticised the separate budgets the draft law proposes for the eight governorates in the country, saying the budgets do not accurately specify the size of expenditure in these governorates.

The committee also said that the specific allocations for public institutions should be included in the general budget, a demand raised by the 11th Parliament in 1992 and 1993.

Noting that only 86 per cent of allocations for capital expenditure was spent in 1993, the committee "hoped" that a higher percentage of these allocations would be spent due to the positive impacts capital expenditure have on the economy.

The committee also called for increasing the salaries of civil servants and army personnel whose living standards it said have deteriorated because of price increases. The increases should include pension for retired army personnel and civil servants, the committee said.

Citing the report of the then House Finance Committee before endorsing the 1993 budget, Mr. Srour emphasised the need for drawing a comprehensive plan for administrative reform in order to limit bureaucratic procedures and attain efficiency.

Demanding more efforts to fight poverty and unemployment, the committee recom-

mended that the government reverse its plans to reduce funds allocated for food subsidies.

The draft budget allocated JD 30 million for food subsidies compared to JD 36 million in 1993.

"The committee emphasises the necessity of (maintaining) the subsidies," said the report, adding that measures should be taken to ensure that subsidies reach the people who need them.

In its report, which was compiled after 17 meetings, the committee stressed the need for modernising investment, banking, financial and foreign labour legislation. It also urged better performances of the duties of government agencies such as the Employment and Development Fund and the Inspection and Control Bureau whose duties, it said, should not conflict with the Audit Bureau.

(Continued on page 5)

Jordan-PLO accord is more of framework than detailed pact

By Wafa Amr

AMMAN — Jordan has made major concessions to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in return for the PLO's signature on the economic cooperation agreement signed on Friday in Amman, political observers said on Saturday.

The four-page agreement was more of a broad framework of economic cooperation than a comprehensive economic pact. It outlined fields of cooperation between the two sides by listing priorities and it gave more emphasis to recognition of the Palestinian authority that would be set up in the occupied territories.

It treated the Palestinian lands as "liberated areas," or as an independent second country.

Palestinians were given a bigger share of involvement in all matters that relate to banking, trade, monetary, and finance, etc. in the Palestinian territories.

Observers noted that it appeared the Politically desired to be politically recognised as the ruling authority during the interim period.

However, the agreement also contained ambiguities in many issues which could not be determined solely by the Jordanians and Palestinians since Israeli bilateral agreements with both sides would affect the implementability of articles included in the

Jordan-PLO accord.

Observers said that the previous eight-page draft economic agreement, which was titled "Agreement between the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation," was more comprehensive and less sensitive to Palestinian demands for symbols of independence. The agreement signed on Friday allowed only for the reopening of branches of the Jordanian banks which were closed by Israel in 1987. This agreement did not allow for the licensing of new banks in the occupied territories, and the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) would not be the sole body authorised with supervising and monitoring activities of Jordanian banks' branches which would reopen in the West Bank.

The Palestinian authority would, along with the CBJ, participate in this process and in preserving stability and exchange rate of the dinar.

Observers said that PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat insisted on having a say on border crossings between Jericho and Jordan by adding a phrase in the economic agreement stating that operation of the Prince Abdullah Bridge would only take place after agreement of the two sides.

Jordan's advantage from the agreement, observers said, was assurances that

Palestinians would not reach separate economic agreements with Israel which would negatively affect it and victimise it. It also sought to assure businessmen and prevent any further deterioration in its economy.

Following is an unofficial translation of the agreement:

Agreement between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation

BASED on the distinguished relationship between the Jordanian and Palestinian people founded on cohesion and integration, in assertion of the importance of cooperation and the inevitability of creating the appropriate climate for promoting bilateral relations, especially in the economic and social fields, and taking into consideration that the joint future construction requires the highest degrees of economic, scientific, technological, and educational cooperation at the official and private sector levels and the highest level of coordination between the two sides in all respects, including banks, development funds, insurance companies, investment institutions and industrial and agricultural production or in the services sector like tourism, health, education or construction

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Residents confident deal could be reached in Taba

QCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinian chief negotiator Nabil Shaath said Saturday Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) could reach an agreement on the launching of Palestinian autonomy in their talks in Egypt next week.

Dr. Shaath said in a telephone interview with Israeli radio from Cairo that the points of disagreement were "no more difficult than in the past and could be resolved."

After a week of wrangling, the PLO and Israel agreed Thursday to resume negotiations in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Taba on Monday to try to implement autonomy in the occupied Gaza Strip and Jericho in the West Bank.

Dr. Shaath said the two sides were still deadlocked on the issue of who should control the international borders of the future autonomous zone, the boundaries of Jericho and the security of Jewish settlements.

"These issues are not as difficult as they were but they need some work," said Dr. Shaath, a political advisor to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat. He said other problems have either been solved or were heading towards resolution, including the issue of an Israeli troop withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, which was to have begun on Dec. 13 according to the self-rule accord signed Sept. 13 in Washington.

Four U.N. staffers along with Iranian, German and Turkish diplomats were evacuated, the spokesman said. Several aid workers also left Saturday in a giant convoy.

Saturday's truce was expected to be only temporary. It is designed to allow the wounded to travel safely to hospitals and permit civilians and diplomats to move away from the battle zones.

After the truce came into force, soldiers loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani and their bitter enemies in an alliance led by northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum stroled along Kabul's main front line on the broad Jardi Maiwand avenue, just south of the city centre.

Enemy fighters separated by just 100 metres of road chatted with passers-by and with refugees taking advantage of the lull to flee the frontline for safer areas after guns fell silent when the ceasefire began at 6 a.m.

A spokesman for the Hezb-e-Islami party of Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Mr. Rabbani's arch-rival, said government jets violated the ceasefire and bombed the Hezb-e-Islami headquarters at Charasyab about 25 kilometres south of Kabul in the morning.

"We will go ahead with full bombardment if the bombing is not stopped," Hezb-e-Islami spokesman Ustad Saeed said in the northwestern Pakistani town of Peshawar.

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Dr. Shaath said the creation of a Palestinian police force and coordination between it and Israeli forces to patrol roads and man border posts were no longer issues of discussion.

Dr. Shaath said the controversy surrounding a disputed document drawn up last week in Cairo could have been avoided had Israel's leak of the draft agreement been postponed.

Israel said last week the two sides had reached a written agreement in Cairo and published a document which the PLO rejected, saying it only reflected Israel's point of view.

On Friday, the Jewish state released 101 Palestinian prisoners in a "goodwill" gesture on the eve of the resumption of the autonomy talks.

"We're very close on finishing about three-quarters of the transfer of civilian authorities. I think even on the stickier matters we are not too far away," Dr. Shaath told Israeli Radio in the English-language interview broadcast Saturday.

"The schedule of withdrawal of the Israeli army is now not a problem, the composition and size and entry of the Palestinian police force and its deployment is now finished," Dr. Shaath said.

"Agreement on security coordination in the borders and on the roads has practically been finished. The safe passage between Gaza and Jericho is almost agreed to," he said.

"We need to work very hard and for an extended period without interruption to be able to finish drafting the whole agreement in no more than two weeks," Dr. Shaath said.

Dr. Shaath added that Chairman Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin would need another week to wrap up agreement on an Israeli troop withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho.

Mr. Rabin told Israeli army radio on Saturday that negotiations on the withdrawal would probably restart in Taba Monday.

"The talks, I hope, will resume on Monday," Mr. Rabin said, warning Palestinians against raising issues already agreed.

"If it becomes apparent on Monday in Taba that the Palestinians are returning to substantive issues talked about in Cairo... this will add obstacles on the road to reaching a written agreement," he said.

The two sides issued a joint statement on Thursday on the resumption after a week of wrangling over the document resulting from talks in Cairo last week.

Dr. Shaath welcomed Israel's release of 101 Palestinian prisoners on Friday but demanded freedom for all 12,000 prisoners who remained in Israeli jails.

Abdul Shafi: Reform talks in Tunis were successful

By Wafa Amr

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Chief Palestinian negotiator to bilateral talks with Israel, Haidar Abdul Shafi, said Saturday that the reformists' talks with the Palestinian leadership in Tunis were "in principle successful" due to the leadership's awareness to the importance of adopting democracy.

Dr. Abdul Shafi returned from Tunis Thursday after talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leadership. He headed a seven-member team representing 120 Palestinian officials and personalities who demanded democratic reforms within the PLO structure and an end to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's "autocratic" decision-making style.

Dr. Abdul Shafi said that during talks with the PLO leadership and the Executive Committee, there has been a positive response to the reformists' demands and he felt satisfied with Mr. Arafat's support for the democratisation of the PLO.

"I would say, in principle, in terms of matters of the depth of awareness of our leadership, and of the people in general, that the importance of democratising the structure of the PLO and of adopting democracy in our political life as a whole have been supported very much by the leadership," Dr. Abdul Shafi told reporters.

Dr. Abdul Shafi held a meeting with around 60 reformists at the Palestine National Council (PNC) headquarters Saturday to brief them on the outcome of the team's trip to Tunis.

He said the results of the team's talks with the PLO leadership were "positive" and said: "Any talk about the failure of our mission or any impression given that it was negative would be inaccurate."

He said he felt there was response to the demands for

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Omani foreign minister arrives

AMMAN (I.T.) — Omani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yusuf Ben Alawi arrived in Amman Saturday on a two-day official visit to Jordan.

In an arrival statement, Mr. Ben Alawi said he was carrying a verbal message to His Majesty King Hussein from Sultan Qaboos Ben Sa'eed of Oman as part of coordination between the two leaders on various issues.

The Omani official said he was to meet with Jordanian officials to exchange with them views on issues of concern to the two countries and the Arab world.

Mr. Ben Alawi said a meeting by the Gulf states in addition to Syria and Egypt which will be held in Damascus Sunday would aim to serve Arab political issues. The six Arab Gulf countries formed a coalition with Syria and Egypt following Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Oman, he said, supports the initiative taken by Arab League Secretary General Ismat Abdul Meguid to mend rifts among Arab states.

He said Oman also supports Friday's agreement between Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), adding that his country has always been supporting Jordan and any effort exerted to achieve peace.

"The agreement between Jordan and the PLO is a step in the right direction. We bless it and hope that coordination between the two sides will continue," Mr. Ben Alawi said.

Jordanian-Omani relations are traditionally strong and the strain in Jordan's ties with other Arab Gulf states caused by differing positions adopted during the Gulf crisis did not extend to Amman's relations with Muscat.

Sultan Qaboos has also been involved in trying to heal the rift between Jordan and the other Gulf states.

Mr. Ben Alawi is the second foreign minister from a Gulf state to visit Jordan this month.

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Rabin does not exclude full pullout from Golan

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin Saturday did not rule out categorically a complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights in return for full peace with Syria.

Asked by military radio about his position if Syria made such an offer, Mr. Rabin replied: "I have to date spoken only of a withdrawal from the Golan, not the entire Golan, and that's my position. But if the question arises, we must discuss it."

The Israeli government could pass a law in parliament for a "withdrawal in the Golan," he said without specifying the extent of the pull-back.

Israel "annexed" the Golan Heights in 1981, after seizing them in 1967, and parliament extended Israeli law over the strategic plateau where some 12,000 Jewish settlers live alongside 16,000 Syrians.

Mr. Rabin said Israel not only sought a peace accord with Damascus but a real "normalisation of relations."

"To date, Syria has not explained what it means by peace while calling for a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan and the dismantlement of our settlements."

"It has still not accepted the idea of comprehensive peace with diplomatic relations as well as the free movement of people and goods, Mr. Rabin added."

He said an agreement with Syria or the Palestinians hold the key to a peace settlement in the Middle East.

"Jordan cannot allow itself to open the way (to peace), much less Lebanon," he said.

Syrian President Hafez Al Assad is to hold talks with his U.S. counterpart Bill Clinton in Geneva on Jan. 16 in a first meeting which has raised hopes of a breakthrough in stalled negotiations between Israel and Syria.

On Wednesday, Syria protested at Israeli "provocation" on the Golan Heights, saying that the policy of Jewish settlements was aimed at sabotaging U.S. peace efforts.

A Syrian daily accused Israel of aiming to "short-circuit" the Assad-Clinton summit by opening the new settlement of Katzin on Tuesday.

An official Syrian daily Saturday slammed what it said was an Israeli media campaign aimed at hampering the summit between Mr. Assad and Mr. Clinton.

(Continued on page 5)

CONGRATULATIONS ARAB BANK

Presents sincere congratulations and best wishes to

HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN

on the occasion of the

Prophetic Ascension.

May God grant your Majesty and the Arab and Islamic nations further prosperity and success in the years to come.

Kunder: NGOs to expand activities in Gaza, West Bank

By Jim Fisher-Thompson and Berta Gomez

WASHINGTON — The progress made last fall in the Middle East peace talks has given a boost to relief agencies that have long operated in the region, according to James Kunder of Save the Children.

"Now that the peace process has taken some dramatic steps forward, we find there is a lot of interest on the part of large international donors in the West Bank and Gaza," he said in a January telephone interview. "Organisations like ours, that have been on the ground there for a long time, are being asked to expand their programmes and that is what we are doing."

Mr. Kunder resigned last summer as head of the U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) at USAID, and is now vice president for programme development for Save the Children, USA. The international non-governmental organisation (NGO) administers more than \$100 million worth of humanitarian and development assistance projects in the United States as well as in 35 other countries.

Of particular relevance to the West Bank and Gaza are projects that build and strengthen the indigenous institutions that will be needed after the Israeli military occupation comes to an end. The declaration of principles signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation at the White House last September envisioned an initial Israeli pull-out from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho, to be followed by "final status" discussions for the rest of the occupied lands.

In response to that breakthrough, Save the Children is undertaking what its literature describes as a "major, three-year programme" in the West Bank and Gaza "to provide training to national and local (development) institutions in management and administrative skills, fundraising, project planning, monitoring and evaluation."

Plans are for the programme to begin in the spring of 1994, using anticipated funds from the U.S. Agency for International Development. Save the Children has been working in the occupied territories since 1973, specialising in areas such as early childhood education, infrastructure development, water conservation, health care, and agricultural productivity.

The organisation hopes to channel renewed donor interest towards added support to the grassroots Palestinian organisations and village committees. It hopes in particular to develop a working relationship with the Palestinian self-governing authority that will be carrying out a variety of administrative functions in the territories before a final status is agreed upon.

"As NGOs operating in foreign lands we should be working to put ourselves out of business," Mr. Kunder said during the interview. "It's an absolute priority for us to work with indigenous organisations but to look forward to the time when they will take over full responsibility for their own development programmes."

Founded in Britain after World War I, Save the Children has branches worldwide that administer food, health care, and education programmes aimed primarily at children. Save the Children, USA first began its work in the rural regions of Appalachia (Eastern U.S.) during the depression in the 1930s. It now operates development programmes in the United States through 10 field offices in both urban and rural areas.

Literature provided by Save the Children demonstrates that its programmes around the world operate on the premise that the best kind of relief is that which is sustainable over the long term — and which can ultimately be managed by the beneficiaries themselves.

In Bangladesh, for example, Save the Children has adopted a "sustainability strategy" so that the 383 Women's Savings Groups (WSGs) it supports there can be fully independent over a five-year period. The WSGs, which make loans to women for various income-generating projects, are viewed as one of the key institutions through which poor women in Bangladesh can gain access to information, services and credit. As of last November, 6,887 village women were involved in the WSGs.

The organisation operates a large agricultural rehabilitation project in the lower Shabelle River valley of Somalia. Working with local Somalis, Mr. Kunder said, Save the Children is helping to reclaim the irrigation and flood control networks that fell into disrepair because of the civil war.

"We're very proud," he noted, "that produce grown in that area is now making its way into markets in Mogadishu and elsewhere." The project is one step in the important process of moving "beyond a relief economy in Somalia to a viable economy," he added.

Many in the NGO community credit Mr. Kunder with having saved thousands of Somalis from starvation when he was the OFDA official in charge of distributing more than \$250 million in food, medical, and shelter assistance in 1992-93 during Somalia's civil war-induced famine.

Asked how it felt to be on the other side of the fence working for an NGO instead of OFDA, which provides a lot of NGO funding, Mr. Kunder quipped, "Now I understand how complicated U.S. aid regulations are."

"Seriously," he said, "I found working for the government to be very worthwhile and stimulating, but now as a private organisation we are not as much concerned about following precisely the dictates of U.S. foreign policy."

He noted that Save the Children operates about 70 per cent of its programmes outside the United States and explained, "We make our own decisions about whom we choose to assist, and while we seek funding from sources like the U.S. government as well as other donors, we are not an agent of the government, and this gives us a certain amount of freedom about this side of the development fence" — USA.

Rifkind, in Gulf to promote arms sales

MUSCAT (Agencies) — British Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind has said his government shared the concern of Gulf Arab states over Iran's purchase of Russian submarines.

"I think there is some cause for concern for Iran's decision to require up to three Kilo-class submarines from Russia," Mr. Rifkind told reporters in Muscat.

Iran took delivery to two Russian Kilo-class submarines last year and a third is on order, making Tehran the first regional power to deploy submarines in the Gulf.

Mr. Rifkind met Oman's Sultan Qaboos during his visit which will also take him to Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Britain has traditionally had close military ties with Gulf Arab states and is currently involved in multi-billion-dollar deals in the region.

In January last year, Oman ordered 18 British Challenger-2 main battle tanks and recovery and repair vehicles when Prime Minister John Major visited Muscat. It was due to start taking delivery late last year of four British Hawk 100 fighter-trainers and 12 Hawk 200 jet fighters.

In Saudi Arabia, Mr. Rifkind will promote the sale of 48 Tornado fighter-bombers. Western diplomatic sources said.

The sources said he will meet during his two-day visit to Saudi Arabia with Defence Minister Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz to discuss a £3 billion order of Tornado planes from Britain.

The order is part of a contract signed by Riyadh and London last year during a visit by Mr. Major to the kingdom. Besides the Tornados, the

contact provides for the purchase by Riyadh of various military equipment from Britain in a deal worth about £4 billion, according to the spokesman of the British Defence Ministry.

The contract is the second phase of the Al Yamamah programme on military cooperation between the two sides. The cost of the first phase, negotiated in 1985, has been estimated at £10 billion.

It covered the delivery of 72 Tornados, 30 Hawks and several warships, as well as military infrastructure equipment.

The second phase, which was supposed to take effect in 1988, has been postponed by the Saudis due to budget restrictions and later the Gulf war, starting with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

The order of 48 Tornado planes had raised the hopes of the British manufacturer which is facing a financial crisis.

Saudi Arabia, itself facing financial difficulties due to the high cost of the 1991 Gulf war and a severe drop in the international prices of oil — the kingdom's main source of income — has declared a 20 per cent reduction in the 1994 budget.

Britain is not hiding its worries that the Saudi move could effect the execution of the contract signed in January 1993.

Rifkind in Bahrain

Mr. Rifkind arrived in Bahrain Saturday on the second leg of his regional tour. His talks with Bahraini officials will focus on strengthening ties between London and Manama, the official Gulf News Agency reported.

plans to build 650 kilometres of new roads in the occupied West Bank with the aim of linking Jewish areas ahead of future Palestinian autonomy," the television said.

The cost of the project has been estimated at \$700 million. Under the autonomy accord signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in September, Israeli troops would have to withdraw from the Gaza Strip and Jericho. Leaving the affairs of the two areas to a Palestinian authority.

The Israeli army also began recently outlining a 17-kilometre road around the future autonomous zone of Jericho.

Road network

Israel has prepared a large-scale project for the construction of a road network that would link Jewish settlements in the occupied territories without passing through Palestinian areas, Israeli Television said Friday.

The Ministry of Defence

with aid pledged by the international community in October to financial infrastructure of the future Palestinian autonomous regions.

The aid is expected to exceed \$2 billion and will cover the five-year interim period of Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho.

Commitment to the deal

But the Palestinian partners, he added, "still had to get organised and create a company," which would be based in the West Bank town of Ramallah.

The Israeli banker said the negotiations took place in Morocco, Britain and Israel.

He said his bank was taking part in financing the project through granting the future establishment control over its branches in Bethlehem and Hebron in the West Bank.

New branches would be opened in various towns and the head of the new bank would be a Palestinian, Mr. Zanbar told the paper.

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Secretary-general of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ahmad Hlayel (left), Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid (centre) and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Al Abbadi Saturday attend a celebration at King Abdullah Ben Al Hussein Mosque, in observance of Isra'a and Mi'raj (Petra photo)

Jordan marks Israa and Mi'raj; minister of Awqaf says occasion should teach lessons

AMMAN (Petra) — Under the patronage of His Majesty King Hussein, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Saturday organised a major religious celebration at King Abdullah Ben Al Hussein Mosque in Amman, in observance of Israa and Mi'raj, the day in which Prophet Mohammad ascended to heaven.

Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Al Abbadi, who deputised for His Majesty at the ceremony, delivered an address outlining the lessons that should be learned from the occasion.

"Al Israa Wal Mi'raj represents an important landmark in the history of Islamic Da'wa (call) and a source of lessons," Dr. Abbadi said.

"This should prompt our nation to analyse and understand these lessons... to be able to face the challenges and the difficulties, especially at the present time when it is plagued by weakness and disunity and when the land of Israa and its jewel, Al Aqsa Mosque, (Jerusalem) are under occupation, so that Muslims find in its lessons what could propel them to fight back the aggressors," he added.

Prophet Mohammad travelled from Mecca to Jerusalem before ascending from there to heaven. The place where he ascended to heaven is where the Dome of the Rock Mosque was built.

Dr. Abbadi said the occasion gives a good lesson to the Islamic Nation and this should make it resist the challenges by having more faith in God the Almighty.

The event took place at a time when the Prophet was at the height of the confrontation

with the enemies of Islam in Mecca and after the death of two of his main supporters, his wife Khadija and uncle Abu Taleb, which gave him a form of divine backing, the minister said.

The event also constitutes an eternal linkage between Kaaba, in Mecca and Al Aqsa Mosque, in Jerusalem, the third holiest shrine for Muslims, he added.

Dr. Abbadi noted that out of the lessons of the event Muslims can view Jordan as the country of steadfastness and challenge in addition to being the way for liberating Jerusalem.

"Its firm stand today in the face of occupation requires from all Muslims to unify their ranks in its support with all their abilities and capabilities," he said.

Other addresses were delivered by several officials and Islamic scholars who reviewed the lessons of the event.

At the end of the celebration, which was attended by Chief Chamberlain Prince Raad Ben Zeid, Dr. Abbadi opened an exhibition of photos entitled The Hashemites.

Amman stock market shoots up

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Trading in the Amman stock market, arguably the best barometer for investors' mood, shot up Saturday in a continuing upward trend, but it was too early to judge whether the climb was a direct result of the signing of the Jordan-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) economic agreement on Friday, bankers and brokers said.

Shares worth JD 10.75 million changed hands during the two sessions of trading Saturday, compared to JD 6.9 million on Wednesday and JD 13.5 million for the entire first week of the New Year.

trictions on commercial bank credits, profit-taking deals prompted by the release of year-end figures and the entry of primary stocks of newly established companies into the secondary market.

"Of course, the signing of the Jordan-PLO economic agreement injected a fresh impetus into the market, but it is too early to judge how far this has contributed to Saturday's trading," said a banking official who handles his bank's portfolio at the AFM.

According to the official, the removal of restrictions from commercial bank lending to exporters was taken by investors as another good sign of a strong Jordanian economy. As such, analysts said, it brought out the funds of many hitherto hesitant investors into the market.

Furthermore, many companies which floated new stocks last year to raise capital have completed their formalities and the shares they issued are slowly entering the market, adding to the volume in the secondary market.

The banking official noted that the accord was formalised only Friday and it would be some time before investors assess the impact of the agreement on the Jordanian economy.

"By and large, people know that the agreement is positive for both sides and could add a new impetus to Jordanian and Palestinian economic activities, said the banker. "But they do not really know where the possibilities exist and how the two sides would be handling those possibilities."

In addition, analysts said, some overcautious investors are awaiting the formalisation of the economic accord by the PLO leadership.

For such investors, the ratification of the accord by the PLO leadership, although sealed and delivered in Amman Friday, is most essential before they would commit their funds into ventures related to Jordanian activities

in the occupied territories, said the broker.

"But a major part of the uncertainties has been removed by the signing of the accord itself," added the broker.

In an annual report early this month, AFM Director-General Omayya Touqan said "political developments" in the second half of 1993 had led to a marked decline in trading in the market. It was an implicit reference to the Sept. 13 agreement between Israel and the PLO.

The agreement brought in a spate of uncertainties to investors and the delay in the formalisation of an accord on Jordanian-Palestinian economic cooperation brought in further scepticism into the market.

The decline in the market since September was clearly visible. The first seven months of the year accounted for 75 per cent of the total annual volume of JD 969 million.

Saturday's focus on the banking sector was a clear sign of interest sparked by the Jordan-PLO accord.

"That is a distinct trend in the market and, as we get along, possibilities of Jordanian companies expanding their activities and markets to the occupied territories would be more clear," said the banker.

"This will create speculators' interest in those companies holding out promises in the occupied territories."

Firms which have already made arrangements on the ground in the occupied territories, such as agency and marketing arrangements and production expansion, are expected to be the first target of AFM investors.

"As it is there is a marked interest in the stock of such companies, but it has not reached a point where investors are exactly plunging headlong into investing in them," said the banking official.



Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mohammad Adwan Saturday sees off a group of Japanese tourists who were on a visit to Jordan and the region (Petra photo)

Japanese tourists' visit deemed good example for future of tourism

AMMAN (Petra) — Tourism and Antiquities Minister Mohammad Adwan Saturday saw off a group of 230 Japanese tourists who had paid a seven-day visit to Jordan and voiced his hope that the group would open the door for larger groups of Japanese to visit Jordan and bolster Japanese-Jordanian ties.

Noting that the Japanese government has pledged to finance some of the Kingdom's tourism projects, the minister said that work was under way for arrangements to lay the infrastructure for these schemes in sites at the Dead Sea and Aqaba.

According to Dr. Adwan, Japan's assistance also covers the Kingdom's campaigns to attract tourists from Japan and setting up a mobile exhibition displaying various artefacts and tourism information about Jordan in Japan.

After landing in Jordan the 230-member group fanned out to Syria, Egypt, Oman and Lebanon and also toured the Nabatean city of Petra, the Greco-Roman city of Jerash, the Dead Sea and Mount Nebo, near Madaba, among other sites in the Kingdom.

According to Dr. Adwan, lack direct route between Amman and Tokyo has been behind the limited number of Japanese tourists coming to Jordan so far. But, he noted,

Anani: Objectivity, clarity give media credibility

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs and Minister of Information Jawad Al Anani said that Jordan's media should seek objectivity and clarity so as to be credible and ought to be free from all constraints if it is to deliver accurate and faithful information to the public.

In a lecture delivered at Philadelphia University Saturday, Dr. Anani said that it is the duty of the government to maintain supervision over the information services in the Kingdom.

In his lecture entitled "Principles of Jordan's information policies," Dr. Anani stressed that no one can draw up an information policy while ignoring the developments around him and in the world at large.

To achieve objectivity and win credibility the media should present balanced reporting and present various parties' views, he said, warning that confining any question to a specific party to determine its course would be dangerous and would yield very unfavorable results.

Only when reports are tackled with rationality and objectivity can they convey the right message to the public which said, should never be led to believe in illusions.

At the lecture, former Minister of Information Ibrahim Izzeddin reviewed developments in Jordan's media since 1989. He covered the parliamentary elections and the Gulf war and their direct connection with the media.

Girl shoots cousin for proposing to kin

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A 20-year-old Zarqa girl shot her cousin Friday and fled the scene of crime, according to a police report.

The victim, a 24-year-old, told police he crawled until he reached one of the nearby houses seeking help, and was rushed to hospital where he is reported in fair condition.

Preliminary questioning of the girl by police indicated that she had shot her cousin because he got engaged to another cousin, not to her. The girl, told police that after arguing with her cousin, who apologised for not getting engaged to her, she lost her temper and fired several bullets which penetrated several parts of his body. She later threw the pistol in a cesspool nearby her house.

The man, who was not identified, dropped charges against his cousin.

"It is up to the court to decide the fate of the girl," a police official told the Jordan Times, adding that the case was not complicated by any previous relationship or matrimonial arrangements between the two cousins.

Jordanian-PLO economic agreement 'in the best interest of the two peoples'

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Cabinet Saturday discussed an agreement on economic cooperation signed here Friday by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Jordanian government.

The economic agreement covers a broad framework for cooperation in the fields of banking and money, trade, labour force, investments, tourism, customs and tariffs, as well as security and border issues and refugees.

A statement after the meeting said that the Cabinet expressed deep satisfaction with the conclusion of the agreement which, it said, came in the best interest of the Palestinian and Jordanian peoples.

Meanwhile, Farouk Kaddoumi, PLO political department chief who signed the accord with Deputy Prime Minister Saeed Al Tal Saturday, said that the agreement followed in-depth discussions, in a spirit characterised by frankness, clarity and brotherly feelings on both sides.

Speaking shortly before leaving Amman, Mr. Kaddoumi said that the signed document clearly reflects the two sides' common interests which should be well protected.

We hope that with the signing of the document, future relations would be based on sound and solid foundations, proportionate with world developments resulting from the creation of world economic blocs and the political challenges looming ahead, said Mr. Kaddoumi.

He said that the two sides have set up several joint committees which would embark on their task in the coming week to discuss various aspects covered in the agreement.

The agreement said the PLO official had underlined the need for political coordination, especially in relation to Jerusalem, the refugees, the multi-lateral phase of the peace process and the various issues that would arise in the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli negotiations.

Mr. Kaddoumi stressed the importance of coordinating Jordanian-Palestinian stands with those of the other Arab states in order to arrive at a comprehensive peace.

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan was at the airport to bid Mr. Kaddoumi farewell.

Al Amal centre's regulations to ensure continuous flow of income

AMMAN (J.T.) — Al Amal Cancer Centre which is being set up near the University of Jordan in Amman is drawing up a set of regulations which would ensure continued income for the centre which plans to offer services to needy patients free of charge.

A spokesman for the national task force which is in charge of establishing the cancer centre noted that a so-called poor patient fund would be set up to raise funds for the treatment of needy cancer patients and several investment projects would be initiated in order to ensure income that would cover the cost of running the centre, expected at JD 3 million annually.

According to the regulations, the centre of revenues come from the cost of the medical services annual subscriptions of the sponsors and the extra charges which the authorities plan to impose on cigarettes and other substances and materials which are thought to be the direct cause of cancer, in addition to the investments made by the national committee in charge of the centre, government aid and contributions mainly coming from the public in Jordan and foreign institutions.

The regulations note that the centre will be providing diagnosis and treatment of various kinds of cancer diseases and will also educate the public on means to prevent it.

According to the spokesman, the centre will set up a national register aimed at providing statistics about the number and type of cancer cases in Jordan and their geographical and demographic distributions.

In addition, the centre will provide training and research work in the field of cancer, with a view to stemming the killer disease. Doctors and nurses from universities will benefit from the services and training courses at the centre, according to the spokesman.

NEWS IN BRIEF

King confers medal on former minister

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday conferred the Jordanian Independence Medal of the First Order on Mr. Nasri Atallah, the former Minister of Tourism secretary general. The honour was in recognition of Mr. Atallah's long and distinguished services in the Kingdom. Mr. Atallah has resigned his post of Jan. 1, 1994.

Prince Faisal pursues studies in U.K.

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein left for the United Kingdom Saturday to take a course with the British Royal Air Force, in pursuit of his studies in air defence, and military sciences. This course will last for one year.

Princess Basma opens clinic

SALT (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein Saturday opened a medical clinic for the General Union of Workers in land transport and mechanics in Al Akrad Valley in Salt City. Princess Basma, who is the honorary president of the union, toured the various sections of the clinic to get familiarised with its equipment. With the inauguration of this clinic, the number of the union's clinics rises to 10. They are located in various areas in Amman, Zarqa, Madaba, Irbid, Karak and Maan. The union is planning to open another clinic in Naour. Saturday's inauguration ceremony was attended by Labour Minister Khaled Eghzawi, Balqa Governor Eid Al Qatameh, Secretary General of the Jordanian Federation of Labour Unions Khaled Shreim, union President Ibrahim Al Ajarmeh and other officials.

Kirghiz minister arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of higher education in the newly

independent Kirghiz Republic, Kakiev Chikovitch, is due here Sunday at the head of an official delegation on an eight-day visit to Jordan. The guest will meet his Jordanian counterpart and other government ministers and officials to discuss bilateral cooperation in educational fields. The minister, accompanied by a number of officials, will also visit educational centres and tourist sites.

Holiday observed

AMMAN (Petra) — Amman Governor Talaat Nawaiseh has ordered the closure of all liquor shops, night clubs and bars on the occasion of Al Israa Wal Miraj Sunday, a public holiday in Jordan. The ban extends from Saturday evening until Monday morning.

Japanese official arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Hiroshi Fukuda is due here Sunday, across the King Hussein bridge, from the occupied Arab territories on a four-day visit to Jordan. He is scheduled to hold talks with government officials and visit a number of archaeological sites.

Cabinet endorses new financial system

AMMAN (Petra) — The Council Ministers Saturday endorsed the country's new financial system which was described as encompassing measures to cater to the administrative reforms and to enhance the government's decentralisation policies. The new system, which is also designed to plug loopholes in the old system, comprises 11 chapters, tackling such matters like definitions, principles, and basis of all matters related to accountancy, revenues, expenditure, loans, securities, financial assets, debt management, financial control and general guidelines pertaining to accountancy errors.

Ghali regrets death of peacekeeper

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian government has received a cable of sympathy from U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali over the death of a member of the Jordanian contingent serving with the U.N. peacekeeping force in former Yugoslavia. The U.N. chief expressed deep grief over the death of Sergeant Hamed Taher Mifreh and voiced his appreciation for the vital role played by the Jordanian contingent in the peacekeeping task in Yugoslavia.

Jordan to attend conference on culture

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan is to take part in a conference of Arab ministers of culture, due to open in Beirut on Jan. 15. Discussions during the four-day conference will cover Arab culture and bolstering pan-Arab cultural cooperation. Jordan will be represented at the meetings by a delegation headed by Dr. Amin Mahmoud, minister of culture.

Jordan to attend ministers of sports meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan is to take part in the meetings of the Executive Bureau of the Arab ministers of sports and youth, due to open in Cairo on Jan. 29. Jordan is represented at the meeting by Minister of Youth Abdullah Oweidat.

First session of tawjihi ends

AMMAN (Petra) — The first session of the secondary school certificate examination (tawjihi) ended Saturday. A total of 78,901 male and female students sat for the examinations in the literary, scientific, commercial, agricultural, industrial, nursing and hotel management courses.

WHAT'S GOING ON EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition by artist Sadik Kwaish entitled "Talisma" at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition on the 100th anniversary of the death of French novelist Guy De Maupassant at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of Iraqi books at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by a number of Jordanian artists entitled "The Sixth Exhibition — Samples From The Contemporary Jordanian Art 93" at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition "Prints and Drawings of Fakhrulnissa Zeid" (1915-1991) until the 15th of January '94 at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "Permanent" Exhibition. (Tel. 643251/2).

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Sanctions — an obsession

ON MARCH 3, 1991 Iraq and the U.S. signed a ceasefire agreement in which Iraq undertook to implement all relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions. Since then and following numerous visits by U.N. inspectors, involving a great deal of hassle and harassment, Iraq has apparently fulfilled its pledge. Yet the U.S. and its allies in the Security Council still demand that Iraq comply with all the resolutions, including those passed after the ceasefire agreement was signed. What the U.S. demands now is an Iraqi implementation of Resolution 688, passed in April 1991, that calls on that country to end repression of the Iraqi people in the north and south.

The Iraqi deputy prime minister, Tariq Aziz, is expected to meet U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali in New York later this month to discuss the lifting of the sanctions imposed on his country that have so far cost Iraq heavily in terms of human suffering and in revenues. Washington, in particular, has moved to make any deal between Iraq and the U.N. impossible. While in the past Security Council members used to protest Iraq's non-compliance with the dictates of U.N. weapon inspectors, some of them, especially the U.S., are now using the old-new pretext: human rights.

It is either evil or gullible to expect a country under siege with two insurrections in most parts of its land to respect human rights. While we do not, of course, condone any human rights abuses under any circumstances, we nevertheless believe that the West, in this case, is simply making it impossible for the Iraqis to do what even the U.S. wants them to do, in a continuing bid to maintain the sanctions.

Iraq, on its part, accuses some Gulf Arab countries of paying "bribes here and there to stop the escalating movement towards lifting the unjust siege on the people of Iraq," as the Iraqi president has put it. Newsreports have suggested recently that the U.S. and its allies are reluctant to lift the sanctions on Iraq lest this lead to further decrease in oil prices and consequently to cancellation of huge arms contracts signed between the West — the U.S. and Britain in particular — and the rich Gulf countries — Saudi Arabia and Kuwait especially.

This state of affairs is of course not conducive for either future stability in the region or the welfare of the Iraqi people, in the north, south and centre. The continued suffering of the Iraqi people might not bring down its leadership, as the U.S. and its allies in the region hope, but it will certainly create more bitterness in the relations among peoples of the region and plant the seeds for more conflicts in the future.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AFTER THREE days of arduous discussions, the Jordanian and the Palestinian delegations reached agreement on economic cooperation, thus paving the ground for fruitful and successful relationship in the coming stage, said Al Rai daily. This is a major achievement for both sides and is considered as a good step to consolidate their united stand. It added, it has put an end to rumours, suspicions and question marks concerning the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship, continued the daily. Though the agreement document has not been published, one can understand from the press conference which announced that it serves as an expression of the strong and brotherly ties between the two peoples on the two sides of the river, and one which has lasted for so long as a unique relationship and a special bondage, the paper said. There is no doubt that the agreement provides for solutions to the outstanding issues in the fields of economy, education, health trade and others, it said. The paper noted in particular to the question of reopening of Jordanian banks in the West Bank, closed since the 1967 war and said that the agreement has now opened the way for this procedure and paved the ground for trade exchanges. At the same time, said the paper, this agreement has bolstered the Jordanian-Palestinian stand at the peace process and could give it some momentum towards helping the Palestinians attain their aspiration and their homeland.

COMMENTING ON the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement, a columnist in Al Dustour said that economic ties agreed on between the two sides constitute the vital link between them, people across the River Jordan at the moment. The document, signed by the Jordanian and the PLO representatives is bound to save the Palestinian autonomy rule from any attempts by Israel to impose hegemony on the Palestinians and their economy, continued the writer Sultan Al Hattab. Indeed, the Jordanian-Palestinian coordination constitutes an umbrella for the establishment of a Palestinian national entity and later the independent Palestinian state, said Hattab. We hope that this agreement, concluded in Amman Friday, would open the way now for a greater measure of coordination among Arab countries, not only those involved in the Arab-Israeli peace process but rather all the Arab countries, said the writer. Such coordination, he added, would lead to solidarity and unity which have been lacking for so long in the Arab World. He said that "Arab coordination is a must in the face of Israel's economic and military expansions."

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

Budget deficit — more than meets the eye

THE CENTRAL government's budget for 1994 was built in a way to show that domestic revenues will exceed current expenditure by JD 147.3 million. Domestic revenue of JD 1275.7 million, the budget makers suggested, is sufficient to cover 113 per cent of the current expenditure of JD 1,128.4 million.

Many commentators and columnists praised this achievement of the Kingdom. The financial position of the treasury, they thought, became comfortable to the extent that it warrants increasing some expenses, such as another round of salary increase, to improve the standard of living of government staffers. (The latest increase was decided and paid in May 1993). Increasing salaries became a reasonable idea since the prime minister and the ministers decided to increase their own salaries by 50 per cent, to improve their life styles. Understandably, ministers feel embarrassed when faced with their hardpressed staff and the tax payers.

The reality of the budget is quite different. The surplus of the domestic revenue and its high coverage of current expenses are the product of budget engineering and creative accounting. It is simply window dressing. It is a myth.

To prove our claim we should uncover the fact that the current budget did not include all the cost of interest which will accrue to the external lenders in 1994. Such interest is definitely a current expense, whether the government will pay it cash or will recognise it in the books and request capitalisation and rescheduling. Such capitalisation or rescheduling is not but a new long-term loan to settle a due commitment.

Organisers of the budget did not take this fact into account. They simply listed among current expenditures the sum of JD 125 million for this purpose, which is the amount payable cash during 1994 to London Club creditors and to other lenders whose debts are not subject to rescheduling. The other

part of interest, which belongs to Paris Club creditors and which will hopefully be rescheduled, was simply ignored, while it should appear as a current expenditure and the financing in the form of rescheduling should appear among the sources in the financing section of the budget.

We roughly estimate that the total interest due on Jordan's foreign debt during 1994 is at least JD 350 million, of which only JD 125 million was actually recognised and listed in the budget, while the balance of JD 225 million remained off-budget, despite the fact that it is a real expense of 1994 financed by fresh borrowing.

Upon correction of the budget to include their real cost of interest, total current expenditure will rise to the level of JD 1553.4 million. The ratio of coverage of the current expenses by domestic revenue will drop from 113 per cent to 82 per cent, and the alleged surplus will be turned to a deficit of JD 75 million. This deficit will be covered from expected foreign aid. In this case, the budget will no longer be balanced, as originally claimed, and all capital expenditure will be covered from external borrowing and foreign aid. The budget is in deficit by any definition.

To calculate the actual deficit in the draft budget of 1994, you can add up all or part of the following items, according to the definition of deficit you like to apply:

JD 225 million interest cost not accounted for JD 66 million deficit of the second section, JD 300 million new loans and re-scheduling (not including all interest), JD 130 million foreign aid most of which not committed yet.

It is of course good to be creative in constructing the budget, provided the real facts are well-known to all decision makers in the government and Parliament, otherwise they may be led to make the wrong decisions, such as raising the salaries and allowing the deficit to become even worse.

New world order — towards new spheres of influence

By Charles William Maynes

WASHINGTON — After a year of foreign policy setbacks, the Clinton administration is changing personalities, not its policy. That is wrong. What is needed is a redefinition of goals. Replacing Secretary of Defense Les Aspin with Bobby Ray Inman will do little to help the administration deal with a torrent of international problems.

In a period of tight budgets and declining military force levels, the administration has avoided the task of matching resources with commitments. Its one announced attempt — "enlargement of democracy" through free market, democratic countries — seemed more an invitation to endless new responsibilities than an effort to impose limits on U.S. commitments.

There is an alternative: call it benign realism.

It would build on the absence of ideological conflict among the great powers. It would capitalise on the spreading trend of democratisation. And it would recognise a hard reality of international politics: Even a superpower will exhaust itself if it tries to police the globe.

Russia is destined to remain the strongest state in the former Soviet Union, just as the United States will remain the strongest country in the Western Hemisphere. Inevitably, both powers will exercise authority in their spheres of influence. What is not inevitable is that either will agree to make its use of power more benign by subjecting it to an international standard of law and morality.

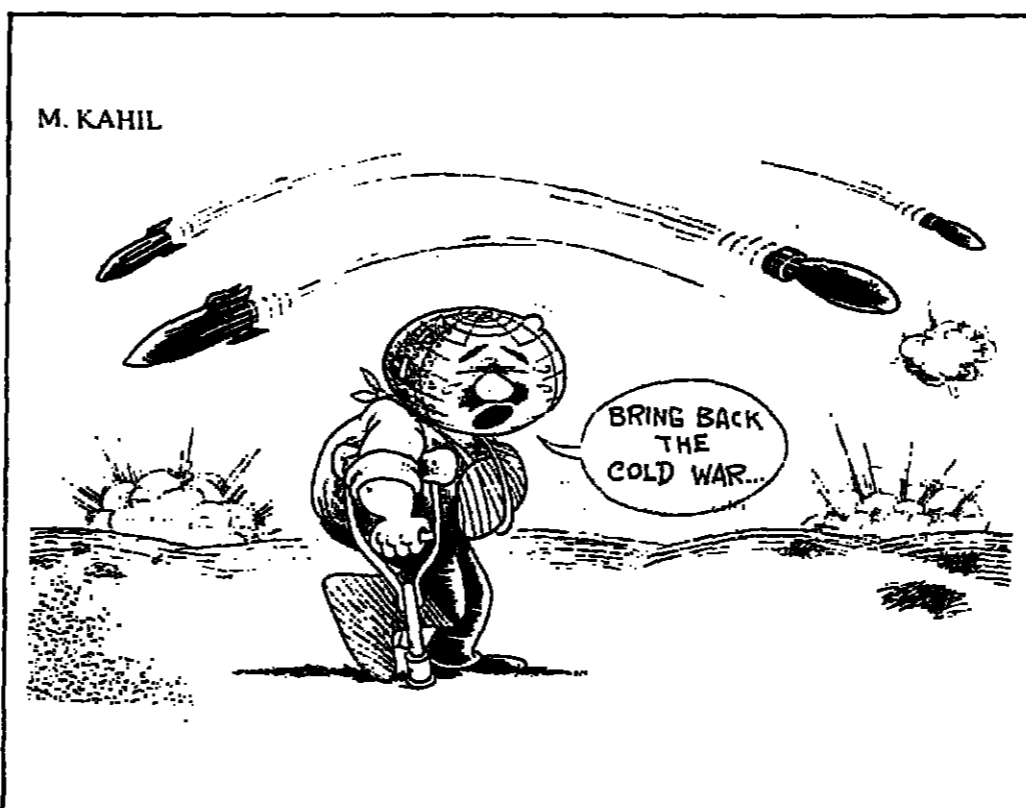
Past attempts to build a world order based on spheres of influence have seemed unprincipled and immoral. Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger were denounced for appearing to support such a world system.

The world could become more comfortable with an order based on traditional spheres of influence if several great powers were democratic or on the path to democracy, and if the dominant powers in each region agreed to exercise authority in accordance with an international process.

The logical candidates in Europe would be America, the European Union and a democratic Russia acting together through the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. But for many reasons, including American opposition, Europe has not developed a coherent foreign policy and security identity.

After Russia's parliamentary elections, in which the ultranationalists and Communists made gains, many are calling for renewed cold war measures to contain Russia. Until it is clear that Moscow's direction is not reactionary, the West must carefully calibrate its acceptance of Russia.

But until the Clinton administration outlines a vision of Europe in which a democratic Russia can enjoy a leading voice, the United States will only find a Russian paragon. No matter what Moscow does, Russia never seems to be in Europe.



As for Asia, China and Japan and America will play the major security role. China is not democratic, but its energies will continue to focus on the problems of feeding a billion people — if the United States does not isolate China through trade sanctions.

No doubt an approach based on spheres of influence in a more democratic world would alarm those who want to see complete equality among states. But the last two decades should have taught us that any semblance of international rule of law must rest on a system that can harness the power of key states that can act.

The world ridiculed and criticised Uganda under Idi Amin, but it took an African country, Tanzania, to overthrow him. The world was annoyed by Manuel Antonio Noriega's involvement with the drug trade in Panama, but only the United States could remove him. The world was horrified when Pol Pot instituted genocide in Cambodia, but only Vietnam took military action.

In none of these crises was the world willing to act, just as it has been unwilling to act in Bosnia. Nagorno-Karabakh, Georgia and Burundi. The tragedy in Bosnia is that there is no regional power with sufficient interest and power to impose order, and that those without sufficient interest will not act.

The shortcomings of the earlier interventions cited here is that they were unilateral, and most were condemned sharply in the United Nations General Assembly. None of the intervening powers saw the need to seek international or regional sanction before or after resorting to military force. The challenge to the international community is to come up with procedures for authorising and disciplining the tendency to intervene when national interests are involved.

The procedures could involve reform of the Security Council to make it reflect the world's real power structure, a serious effort by each great power to accommodate the

security interests of the others, and a commitment to international law even if at times a great state would have to act unilaterally to protect its interests.

The Security Council must be reformed, because its composition deprives it of legitimacy in several parts of the world. Major powers such as Germany, Japan and India, with influence on international peace and security at least as great as that of some of the permanent members, have no permanent voice. Whole regions, such as Africa and Latin America, are often not represented by their larger members.

Reform of the Security Council must proceed with the goal of creating a security community, one that the major powers will strive to defend because it reflects their interests.

In selecting new permanent members (which will not have the veto), the United Nations must make sure that no state enjoys permanent membership unless it is prepared to make significant financial and security contributions to the international community. Germany and Japan should be expected to participate in noncombat peacekeeping operations. India, Nigeria and Brazil should expect to increase their financial contribution.

This new security community would recognise the special role of major states in their own region. During the Reagan administration, France and Mexico together attempted to challenge the United States in Central America and failed.

The West will fail if it attempts to challenge Russia in areas in its legitimate sphere of influence. India, Nigeria and South Africa will play disproportionate roles in their spheres of influence.

Because major powers are no longer divided by ideology, and because most states now try to enhance their national power through economic development rather than territorial conquest, the international community has the scope to

press the large states to exercise their power in accordance with international norms. The United States, for example, probably will not be able to end the disorder in Haiti without military action. Yet a lack of clarity about America's national interests in this region paralyses action.

A policy of benign realism would not let a band of thugs create chaos so close to American shores. Yet any military action could, from the outset, involve monitoring by the United Nations and the Organisation of American States of the use of U.S. power on the island.

Idealists and proponents of strict equality among U.N. members would object to a world based on spheres of influence, however benign. But the truth is that if anyone is to end military rule in Haiti, it will have to be the United States. And if someone is to end the fighting between Azerbaijan and Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh, it will be Russia.

Great powers will not always take action. The world may have to live with disorder at several points on the globe and will have to do the best it can through dialogue, mediation and humanitarian assistance.

If force is to be used, however, it would be more realistic to look to the great powers for action than to the United Nations. Even though there may occasionally be a role for muscular multilateralism, a more common path would be for the international community to legitimate a powerful state with a national interest in acting to serve as the enforcement arm of the international community.

If there is to be a new world order, it will not be a centralised one with multilateral armies directed by the Security Council. It will be a decentralised one that rests on a more traditional balance of power made more tolerable by the advance of democracy and by the declining interest of most states in conquest — *The New York Times*.

There may still be time for talking

By Katherine Rath

PARIS — Nine months ago, a friend arrived sobbing at my door in Algiers. He told me the government was forcing him to strip away the symbol of his faith. From now on, even the most devout Muslims would have to shave off their beards of risk, he said. He thought, "Were they really this important?"

When I had arrived in glittering white Algiers, a capital city superbly framed in green and flowered hill-sides against an immense blue sky. I could not have imagined what the beauty would come to hide. Only three years before, Algeria had seemed to be a bright start of liberalism in the Arab World.

In April, a few days after the encounter at my door, I watched police corralling men with beards and trucking them off to the station, where their names were taken down. Their simple cotton Muslim gowns were torn and their beards roughly shaved away. That day, a cousin of my friend came home badly bruised, his face bleeding. He said the police had forced him to shave off his beard with a piece of plastic and had laughed as he scraped away. He was a grocer, not politically involved.

Not involved, that is, except as a practicing Muslim and sympathiser with a party — the Islamic Salvation Front — that was winning parliamentary elections when the regime annulled them in January 1992. The front had campaigned to replace a regime that continues to be widely despised as corrupt, incompetent and western-inspired.

Despite its status as an OPEC member, the quality of life in Algeria is often worse than that in Egypt. Shortages of coffee, bread and sugar are frequent. Prices have risen sharply in the past year but salaries are frozen. Unemployment is estimated at 25 per cent.

Set out to try to understand the Islamic trend, I watched hope become tension, tension turn to anger and anger burst out in violence.

The sound of gunshots in the night has now become routine, along with the curfew: being out after 11:30 p.m. can mean death. In fact, the streets of Algiers are empty after 8 p.m. — which is most unusual for a Mediterranean city. Restaurants are virtually empty at night.

In Germany recently, I interviewed the leader in exile of the Islamic Salvation Front, Rabah Kebir. His version of the general picture matched

the line I had heard among ordinary Islamists in Algiers: "The Islamic movement is a revival of a society's concentration on its origins in hope of inspiring change. It started at the time Arab nations were colonised. In Egypt there was the Muslim Brotherhood, and in Algeria there was the Association of Ulama. At the time, these organisations were most concerned with working for Arab independence. They succeeded in that goal... We are taking up that original movement once again."

But anger is mounting in the gritty streets of Algiers. Radical new militias are being formed, over which the Salvation Front appears to have little if any control. An Armed Islamic Group has claimed responsibility for most of the recent killings of foreigners.

Thousands of foreigners have fled in recent weeks — including this writer. Western countries' cultural centres have closed. Foreign newspapers have been unavailable for many months, and the local press is censored.

The opposition became violent after the 1991-92 elections were annulled and the party was outlawed. The country now resembles a powder keg with a fuse burning shorter every minute.

When a nonviolent party won the first round of voting by a landslide in the country's first free elections, western governments stood by in silence as the regime annulled the vote, banned the party and began the jailing of at least 7,000 of the party's members and sympathisers. Amnesty International has confirmed what the people in Algiers say: that torture is systematic in the crowded prison camps.

Western diplomats estimate that at least 35 people a day are being killed by one side or the other.

Mr. Kebir called a press conference in Bonn to announce tough conditions for any dialogue with the authorities. He also addressed outsiders: "How can anyone understand a world community that looks away when people are tortured?"

North African Islamists are Sunnis, not Shiites like the Iranians. Mr. Kebir is not the only Salvation Front leader to assert that an Islamic Algeria would "not be another Iran."

How oppressive the Islamists would be if they came to power is impossible to say. In any case, they exist, and the army and police of Algeria are losing control. Westerners should be talking with Algerian Islamists, it seems to me — *International Herald Tribune*.

Europe back on front burner at White House

By Charles Aldinger
Reuter

WASHINGTON — Economic woes and security concerns in the former Soviet Union are tightening post-cold war bonds between Washington and NATO and could slow a Clinton administration turn towards Asia, according to analysts.

That assessment comes as President Clinton prepares to temporarily put his drive to embrace Asia-Pacific nations on a back burner and attend a NATO alliance summit in Brussels next week. He will also visit Moscow and Prague. Private analysts say financial and political problems in Russia and security concerns of new East European democracies are pressing Mr. Clinton to reexamine the importance of Europe to the U.S. security despite the collapse of the Soviet war machine.

"We're certainly not going to turn our backs on Asia where the future lies," said Raymond Garthoff, a foreign policy expert at Washington's Brookings Institution. "But Europe is troubled and there's a growing appreciation here of nurturing NATO for new states."

He and others also noted that Mr. Clinton's foreign and domestic policy plates were currently full, including the Middle East, North Korea, Haiti, Bosnia, health care, crime and a new national budget.

Gone, they said, is the knee-jerk perception that Europe has suddenly turned right-side-up after the cold war. Even France appears to be supporting the need for Washington to play a strong role in the new Europe.

Mr. Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher have made it clear in recent months

that they see Asia and the Pacific as a rich prospective trading partner and ally which has not been adequately courted by Washington.

But Mr. Christopher also recently named Strobe Talbott — a former journalist and expert on Russia — as deputy secretary of state, the number two position in the department.

"We should be cementing ties with Asia. But the problems in Russia and Eastern Europe are pressing enormous, and I don't think they will be downgraded by the 'Pacific strategy' just because the cold war is over," said Ernest Graves of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

"Russia and its neighbours don't pack financial and political clout," added the retired army general. "But instability there could pose very sudden problems, including nuclear ones, for us and our NATO allies."

Graves pointed to reluctance by Ukraine, for example, to dismantle and get rid of all former Soviet nuclear weapons on its soil in part because of fears about Russian ambitions and a desire to get more money from the West.

Mr. Clinton stressed at an Asia-Pacific economic summit meeting in Seattle last November that the United States would become much more actively engaged in the region.

Mr. Christopher also said in a speech at the University of Washington just before the Seattle meeting: "As we approach the next century, America must once again look West — West to Asia and West to our Pacific future... Today, no region in the world is more important to the United States than Asia."

He and others agreed that Asia is now a more important trading partner than Europe

Accord more of framework

(Continued from page 1)

and infrastructure like roads, electricity, water, energy and telecommunications.

In affirmation of the two sides' desire in laying down effective principles and foundations for facilitating the free passage of workers and flow of capital as well as commodities and products and services, the two sides discussed a draft agreement on economic cooperation between the government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation and have decided that the draft constitutes an appropriate, beneficial and acceptable framework for bilateral cooperation.

In particular, the two sides agreed on the following:

The two sides will draft a protocol that determines the body authorised, jointly, to organise the reopening of Jordanian bank branches.

After the two sides have reviewed the decision of the (PLO) Executive Committee in its meeting on Jan. 3, 1994 which approved the reopening of Jordanian bank branches which were closed as a result of the occupation, and in light of the discussions between them, the two sides have agreed that Jordanian bank branches which were closed in 1967 be reopened, that the CBI is the body authorised by both sides to organise the reopening of branches and monitoring of their activities and supervise them in accordance with existing Jordanian laws, regulations and instructions, and (the both sides agree) to cooperate in doing that with the Palestinian institutions concerned, and to submit to the relevant body in Palestine reports on activities of these branches.

This agreement will continue to be valid until the Palestinian monetary authority is established.

A joint monetary and financial committee will be set up to cooperate in both countries in order to agree on financial, monetary and banking policies during the Palestinian interim period, and until the central Palestinian monetary authority is established.

The two sides also agree to cooperate in order to maintain the value of the Jordanian dinar and exchange rates and manner of dealing with these currencies.

The Jordanian dinar will continue to be used in Palestine until the Palestinian currency is issued, in addition to the utilisation of other international and Arab currencies.

The two sides will cooperate on studying the establishment of specialised banks which the joint committee considers fit to participate in the fields of industry, housing and agriculture.

The two sides establish a joint committee to encourage the commercial exchange of national agricultural and industrial products between the two countries and taking measures necessary.

To raise the volume of trade between the two countries to a level to be determined later in a separate protocol.

B. To study the establishment of a joint free zone in the Jordan Valley for joint transit trade, industry and investment.

C. The two sides agree, during the interim period, to facilitate the movement of Palestinian trade as well as transport and storage and shipping for the purpose of reexporting Palestinian goods to Arab states and to the rest of the world.

D. To rebuild the Prince Abdullah Bridge simultaneously with the expansion

and development of other bridges and would not be operational except by joint agreement in order to facilitate movement of persons, goods, vehicles, and both sides study the possibility of adding other bridges to facilitate the processes of transportation and crossing.

The two sides agree to study setting up joint projects in tourism areas and to cooperate in organising group tourist trips and to encourage and develop the tourism industry and to promote it and to study the possibility of establishing a joint tourist transportation company.

The two sides have agreed to draft a protocol which will organise the exchange of labour force and labour rights which include social security.

The two sides will draft a special agreement on encouraging joint investment and its protection and to provide all necessary facilities for the creation of an incentive environment for the private sector which would enable it to set up large and medium size investment projects and to encourage Jordanian and Palestinian capital abroad to participate in these projects.

The two sides agree to encourage the private sector in both countries to participate in construction activities and in implementing housing and infrastructure projects (electricity, energy, water, telecommunications).

The two sides agree to exchange expertise in the field of agricultural development through the exchange of scientific studies and technical skills and expansion in the establishment of joint scientific centres.

The two sides agree to encourage the private sector in setting up a joint company in the free zone area (Jordan Valley) to store, freeze and market and process agricultural products (vegetables, fruit, animal products and marine wealth).

The two sides have agreed on close cooperation and coordination in the field of promoting infrastructure (electricity, energy, water, telecommunications) in order to serve the interests of both through the concerned bodies in both countries in order to put forth the best technical means which would achieve this end.

The two agree on coordination to put forward a mechanism to activate joint efforts and to call the six committees which have emanated from the joint Jordanian-Palestinian Higher Committee for a meeting as soon as possible in order to coordinate and discuss the issues of Jerusalem, economic cooperation, water, refugees, security and borders, and laws, provided the committee's reports would be submitted to the joint Palestinian-Jordanian Higher Committee.

The two sides agree on continued coordination and consultation within the framework of the peace process in a way which will achieve joint interests of both the Jordanian and Palestinian sides as well as the Arab side in their effort to arrive at a just, comprehensive and permanent peace and in line with Jordanian and Palestinian interests and secures the achievement of the Arab Palestinian people of their legitimate national rights, including their rights to return to their homeland, to self-determination and the establishment of their independent state on their national soil with Jerusalem as its capital.

Born sides reiterate the importance of activating this coordination which benefits the interests of both countries and the Arab Nation.

Appointment of Muslim army chaplain signals growing acceptance

By Rosalind Mandine Murphy

WASHINGTON — Captain Abdul-Rasheed Mohammad, the first Islamic chaplain to be commissioned into the U.S. Army, believes his appointment signals a growing understanding of Islam in the United States.

"My appointment is only a beginning...I am very optimistic for the future of Islam in the West," Capt. Mohammad said Jan. 5 during a WorldNet television programme with participants in Cairo, Doha and Kuwait.

Capt. Mohammad, an African-American originally from Buffalo, New York, was commissioned as an Army chaplain on Dec. 3. After completing his training, he will begin his service with the 18th Airborne Corps stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina in April 1994. He will be joined there by his wife, Saleemah, and their six children. (His wife is expecting their seventh child).

With Capt. Mohammad's appointment, U.S. Army chaplains now represent the Christian, Islamic and Jewish faiths. His job will be to facilitate the spiritual needs of Muslims serving in the military and offer assistance and counseling to all members of the U.S. Army, regardless of their faith. The Department of Defence estimates that 2,700 Muslims now serve in the U.S. armed forces, with about 1,400 serving in the army.

In order to reach out to all Muslim service members, Capt. Mohammad said he hopes to establish a team of Islamic representatives "in every strategic location where the army has troops." These representatives would report back to him on the needs of Muslim service members.

Capt. Mohammad said he hopes to establish a regular correspondence programme with all Muslim troops and their commanders in order to explain Islamic needs, particularly during Ramadan. He also hopes to work out requirements with the Department of Defence on establishing regular Islamic prayer services, following Muslim dietary require-

ments and allowing Muslim women in the military to wear the hejab.

Regarding Muslim women serving in the army, Capt. Mohammad said he must address how these service members can properly wear the hejab "without compromising various missions that may come up in the military."

Capt. Mohammad expressed his hope that all Muslim women serving in the military will choose to wear the hejab in order to send a unified message to non-Muslims in the armed services.

The building of a mosque "on at least one installation" of the U.S. armed services is another important goal for Capt. Mohammad. The building of a mosque would serve as "a symbol...of religious tolerance within the armed forces," he said.

Capt. Mohammad said he plans to lead a delegation of Muslim service members to Mecca this year for the hajj pilgrimage. He expressed gratitude to Saudi Arabia for "affording hospitality towards (U.S.) Muslim service mem-

bers and reservists, for the last two years" of the hajj.

An important part of Capt. Mohammad's duties at Fort Bragg will be working directly with Muslims who have personal problems, such as marriage and parenting problems, he explained. Capt. Mohammad said he will also work to raise awareness among service members of the plight of Muslims throughout the world, such as in Bosnia and Somalia.

Capt. Mohammad said he hopes his appointment will lead to an increase in the number of Islamic chaplains serving in the armed services. He said he also hopes his appointment will spur U.S. Muslims to serve in the military and prompt those who are serving to be open in their religious practice.

Asked about a potential conflict between what is required of him as a Muslim and what is required of him as a member of the U.S. armed services, Capt. Mohammad made clear that "as a Muslim, whatever I do, I am responsible and accountable first to Allah...This will never change."

If such a conflict arises, Capt. Mohammad said he will consult with the imam of the United States and the Muslim World and rely on Islamic teachings for guidance. The key, he said, is "to not allow nationalism, race and culture to supersede or go beyond what Islam tells us."

He said he has been a Sunni Muslim for about 20 years. As an African American, he said he was particularly influenced by the teachings and recordings of Malcolm X, the American Muslim leader of the early 1960s.

Capt. Mohammad said he and his family pray together at least twice a day. All his children — from the youngest (two years old) to the eldest (age 15) — are "very familiar" with Islamic prayers, he said. Although it is often a struggle to get them away from their toys and games, he said "they are learning to balance Islam" with their childhood pastimes.

Capt. Mohammad previously served as a chaplain with the New York state correctional service and in the U.S. army as a counselor in the Army Drug and Alcohol Prevention and Control Programme. He has a bachelor of science degree in anthropology from New York State University and master's degrees in counselling education from San Diego State University and in social work from the University of Michigan.

These misunderstandings must be addressed through educational programmes and establishing administrative requirements that meet the needs of Muslim service members. The most effective way to increase tolerance, however, is for Muslims to set themselves as role models, he said.

"We have to learn more tolerance, more acceptance, and more appreciation for good strong values, which I think Islam has always symbolised...We have to as Muslims take the lead by example, in being the first to pick up this cause of moral strength," Capt. Mohammad stressed.

The human self, off the shelf

By Bryan Appleyard

IN THE past week eggs from aborted fetuses, "designer" babies and artificially induced late pregnancy have all been sprung upon us like seasonal gifts of hot issues from a malign media Santa. Suddenly we have to make up our minds about artificially induced elderly pregnancies, black women choosing to have white babies, and the intensity and rationality of our "yuk" response when confronted with the possibility of unborn mothers.

The clustering of these stories if odd, but individually they are entirely predictable. For a variety of reasons, primarily economic, human biology is taking over from physics as the dominant science. The pace of discovery since the unravelling of the DNA molecule has been breathtaking, and the number of feasible applications is accelerating rapidly. Globally, vast sums of money are at stake. In the next 10 or 20 years our "yuk" responses are likely to be tested to destruction.

The reaction to these three biology stories has not been impressive. Those with doubts about the Brave New Biological World have tended either to emit variations of the expletive "yuk" or to miss the point, as did Virginia Bottomley when she questioned the ethics of making a 59-year-old pregnant on the irrelevant grounds of the future care of the children. Even less impressive. Most banally, they have celebrated an extension in "choice" — the most corrupted word in the

contemporary lexicon — as if giving ourselves more things constituted a moral programme. Or they have resorted to dishonest logic. "All the time we are adapting to change. That is how we have evolved," said Professor Brice Pitt, public education director for the Royal College of Psychiatrists, neatly, yet outrageously, implying that whatever scientists decide to do represents a kind of bracing Darwinian pressure on the species. Finally, there has been mandarin abuse of laymen, as when Professor Stuart Campbell, head of obstetrics at King's College Hospital, London, called doubters "non-medical moralists".

Both sides insist on variations of the "each case on its own merits" theme and, as a result, the arguments have become pointless and irresolvably over-specific. There is an urgent issue here, but it cannot be understood by wading through rows about the suitability of 59-year-old mothers, the depth of anguish of the infertile or the desirability of designing one's baby.

The real issue can most clearly be seen in the words used by the apologists for these innovations. Dr. Peter Brindley, of the Bourn Hall Clinic, Cambridge, was asked to comment on the use of eggs from aborted human fetuses for the treatment of infertility. "If the general public feels ready for it," he said, "then I believe we should go ahead. If not, then we will have to delay. I believe it will become acceptable, certainly within the next five years."

On the same subject, Tim Radford, the *Guardian's* sci-

ence writer, commented: "The problem is that science has once again apparently outpaced society's ability to absorb it."

Both statements blandly contain a quite appalling assumption. They assume that there is an institution called science that is somehow separate from normal human culture — the "general public" — and yet which can meaningfully be said to be ahead of that culture in the sense that, in time, we shall all see the wisdom of letting the scientists do what they like. We shall, as it were, "progress" to a level of civilisation in which we will accept, in this case, the marketing of live human reproductive tissue with or without the consent of the human to which it once belonged.

This assumption is appalling for three reasons. First, the belief that science is, in any worthwhile sense, "ahead" of the rest of society is nonsensical unless your idea of human history is restricted to the increase of scientific knowledge or you are prepared to believe that scientists are intrinsically superior beings. Second, no sane human being can possibly think it a good thing that we should do anything simply because we can. Third, the assumption itself is appalling, because, wrong-headed and despicable though it may be, it is probably right.

For the truth is that the "general public" will, in due course, acquiesce in this horror. Ethical committees might slow the process, but not for long. And, by the time we have slumped into post-"yuk" acceptance, the scientific

assault on human life will have gone much further. Hundreds of new ethical demands will have surfaced, under-written with the supercilious assumption that, in time and probably with the help of the supercilious Baroness Warnock, we shall all find the scientists' case "acceptable."

The research will happen, if not here then elsewhere, and it will be applied. Even if the British or other Europeans decide that this or that service is unethical, wealthier citizens will be able to buy it abroad. I would guess that within the next few decades, most babies of richer families will be "designed" in one way or another.

Furthermore, biological science is likely to produce the most hugely profitable technologies of the next 20 years. Western companies are unlikely to feel they can afford to have too many qualms — especially when competing with, for example, an entirely qualm-free China whose government has recently announced a brutal eugenic policy in the name of "improving" the human stock. Finally, the scale of the research is now so vast that unforeseen spin-offs are inevitable. The most ethically unconcerned research can, as a side-effect, produce ethical dynamite.

The line of least resistance when faced with this approaching tidal wave mindless chatter about a welcome extension of choice, or to celebrate it as another step on the glorious human quest for knowledge. Both of these responses fail to acknowledge the glaringly obvious fact that what we are dealing with here is something fundamentally

new. This is not a science that speculates thrillingly, if at times incoherently, about the nature of matter or the history of the cosmos. Nor is it a science that simply aspires, frequently with catastrophic effects, to improve the quality of our external well-being. This is science that is invading the human self.

The sheer newness of this development has not been understood. The rhetoric of science has tended to disguise it as more of the same — more improvements such as microwave ovens or vaccinations. Similarly, the word "natural" has been used and abused to blur the debate — eggs from aborted fetuses may not be natural, say the apologists, but neither are antibiotics or economic policy. This trick again tends to emphasise that what we are getting is more, not different, science.

The effect of this and of the inevitable feeling of technological fatalism is to marginalise the ethical debate, to reduce it to the level of making new deals with the same old science. It is no longer an ethical debate at all, but a negotiation. Baroness Warnock of this state of affairs. Her committee style is, in effect, to exclude the possibility of moral commitment and to impose the philosophical cop-out doctrine of consequentialism. This says that in a world in which there is no moral consensus, only the consequences of decisions can be discussed. In other words: ethics cannot be allowed to interfere with the smooth working of any ethics committee.

This world in which those in charge of ethics do not actually believe in them was hilariously encapsulated by Professor Raanan Gillon, editor of the *Journal of Medical Ethics*, when he insisted: "My preference is not to interfere, but let people come to their own decisions."

Since we appear to have decided not to have real ethical debates, then the negotiations we have in their place will inevitably tend to move in the direction of the hard scientists. Their case will always appear stronger because, in the absence of coherent commitment from the other side, the opposition can always be portrayed as irrational, Luddite or even barbaric. Protests will be heard as sectarian voices, too specialised to be of significance.

The reality is that the invasion of the human self is the new barbarism. The Enlightenment answered the moral and philosophical challenge of science with a simple statement: the human self is an end in itself and can never be a means to an end. This can be taken to be either a religious affirmation or a humanist statement of what must be sacred. It is now likely to be overturned by technological and commercial pressures. But we, the last heirs of the Enlightenment, can still try to hold the line. For the statement is perfectly reasonable; it is not specialised, sectarian or Luddite, and it provides a beautifully simple response to the hard scientists: "Yuk means no" — The Independent.

Abdul Shafi: Reforms talks positive

(Continued from page 1)

leadership cannot be done at this stage," Dr. Abdul Shafi said. "It is unacceptable that Abu Ammar (Arafat) alone makes the decisions."

Other members of the team felt satisfied with the fact that the leadership had taken their movement seriously and accepted to open a democratic dialogue with them in order to implement changes. They are not under the illusion that reforms would immediately take place, but they hope to remain a strong force, working as an internal pressure group that would monitor the leadership's actions and continue to call for democratisation through popular pressure.

Popular insistence on carrying out elections in the occupied territories was one way of achieving change, Dr. Abdul Shafi said. "We will reject any delay to carrying out elections as stated in the PLO-Israeli accord."

Dr. Abdul Shafi said that he found the spirit of the Executive Committee "not rejectionist to our calls for democratic reforms but not actively supportive. But I can say our mission was successful."

Rabin does not rule out total pullout

(Continued from page 1)

Al Thawra said the campaign, orchestrated "by Western and Israeli circles as well as the American media, is financed by the Israelis," and aimed at hampering the summit between the Syrian and U.S. leaders.

It also said statements by Israeli military officials that

violence in southern Lebanon may increase during the summit were "clear threats."

On Thursday, the Israeli army warned, that fighting against the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon would surge ahead of the Jan. 16 meeting in Geneva.

Al Thawra said the historic summit "will define the future of the region for a long time."

Panel wants minor budget changes

(Continued from page 1)

The committee also proposed a thorough study of the situation and role of a number of institutions to assess their performance and take measures to merge those which have similar duties.

Among these are the Jordan Geographic Centre, the Agricultural Marketing Corporation and the Aqaba Regional Authority.

The committee called for supporting the Civil Defence Department and emphasised the need to provide the judiciary with sufficient funds and qualified personnel to assure an effective performance of its duties.

A study of Jordanian universities should be made with a view to guiding them towards meeting the requirements of the labour market and having it focus more on vocational and technical specialisation, the committee said.

The committee said it regrets the presence of governmental and non-governmental research institutions which duplicate the work of each other, wasting public funds.

The committee also urged necessary measure to ensure that all citizens have health insurance, calling for more support for the Royal Medical Services.

The youth sector, the agricultural sector, and municipalities should also receive more attention and support, the committee said. It called on the government to draft a new law under which the work of municipalities could be assessed.

The House will begin its deliberations of the draft budget Tuesday amidst expectations that the session would last for at least three days.

At the outset of Saturday's session, House Speaker Taher Al Masri briefed deputies on the outcome of his visit to Syria on Friday, saying the visit aimed at discussing problems over the transfer of the presidency of the Arab Parliamentary Union from Damascus to Khartoum.

Mr. Masri said that he and his Syrian counterpart Abdul Qader Kaddoura also discussed the economic sanctions against Iraq and the situation in Yemen.

After a debate over the resignation of deputies Abdul Rauf Al Rawabdeh, Awad Khleifat, Ibrahim Shihadeh and Samir Habashneh from the Judiciary Committee, Mr. Masri said he would meet with the deputies before a decision is taken on their resignations.

Jordan Times Tel: 667171

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Balladur says unemployment fight will take time

ernment had given away 80 billion francs (\$13.5 billion) to business without creating any jobs.

A record 3.29 million people, 12 per cent of the workforce, were out of work in

November.

"Don't you think there a billion francs could have been

used differently?" Mr. Mitterrand asked. Mr. Chirac had also called for more sweeping reforms.

Mr. Balladur did not reply to the criticism but announced he will convene a meeting of ministers with economic non-

He will call in employers

groups and trade unions at the end of February to talk about the economic situation and finalise key elements of a five-

year plan for jobs. They include a measure encouraging workers to fix the number of hours they work by the year.

rather than the week, which would make work schedule more flexible.

Mr. Balladur said he was disappointed in the sluggish business recovery and conceded the economic crisis was

deeper than he had expected when his conservative majority took power last March.

in slowing down the increase in numbers of unemployed workers in the second half of 1999.

"What goal can the govern-

ment set itself for 1994?" M
Balladur asked.

SCOPE
DAY JANUARY 9, 1994

LIBRA: (September 23 to Octo-

her 22) By being of real service to others now and showing that you are truly interested in their welfare, you sow the seeds for

-SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This can be a

particularly happy day if you contact really good friends you like and enjoy activities, amusements that truly satisfy.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Family ties are wondering if you aren't being quite selfish, so be sure you assist

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY JANUARY 9, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carcail Fighter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You will be able to start the new week with renewed interest in home and family-life and whatever else is of prime importance to you leading to greater abundance and satisfaction. Be alert, due.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) By being of real service to others now and showing that you are truly interested in their welfare, you sow the seeds for much success and happiness in the future.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This can be a particularly happy day if you contact really good friends you like and enjoy activities, amusements that truly satisfy.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Family ties are wondering if you aren't being quite selfish, so be sure you assist them in any way that you can and increase harmony, security within the home.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) The study of fine literature and listening to inspiring sermons at services of your choice helps you today to raise the level of consciousness for better and more successful living in the future.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) By reverting to excellent standards under which you were raised, plus the best of your own experiences you have found successful, you will be able to solve current problems wisely.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Friendliness at social gatherings tonight will produce excellent results with influential persons you encounter. Don't be afraid to state your aims and ambitions of constructive, ethical nature.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is the ideal day to solve any emotional problems by checking Divine Guidance and also the advice of wise elders who will give suggestions.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Get you special talents before the right people on this free day. Then get into places where interesting people congregate and make fine contacts, be happy.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Make this a productive day by concentrating upon worldly affairs and getting plans formulated for a more successful future.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Take the time to have a long talk, with persons of a religious background and you find that it will be very enlightening and helpful.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Your intuitive faculties are working very accurately today and you would be wise to use them in the solving of present problem which you may have.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) This day affords you an opportunity to come to a better understanding with few persons in your life. Listen to their ideas and give credit where credit is

THE Daily Crossword by C.F. Murray

ACROSS

- 1 No longer current
- 5 Not harmonious
- 9 Season
- 13 Woody's boy
- 15 Season plant
- 16 Kingston is one
- 16 Jazz composer
- 18 Alaska's first governor
- 19 Bedazzle
- 20 Winter Murdoch
- 21 Like mist
- 23 Flair
- 24 N.T. book, abbr.
- 25 Knocked down
- 28 Harassed
- 33 Blue dye
- 34 Lat. abbr.
- 36 Scornful expression
- 37 Tissue firmness
- 38 — boom
- 40 Beverage nut
- 41 Wide awake
- 43 Wife of Jacob
- 44 Eccentric word
- 45 Ship rocks
- 47 Landlords
- 48 Vagabond
- 49 Branded buttonhole
- 51 Swift's flying
- 54 Transaction
- 55 Butcher serving
- 56 Dashed
- 59 Winning hand
- 62 Identical
- 63 Hub out
- 64 Satisfactory
- 65 Fader of agent
- 66 Meandering progress
- 67 Design

DOWN

- 1 Unpaid rodent
- 2 Lined up
- 3 Twist around
- 4 Large quantity
- 5 Violent force, old style
- 6 Chinese idiom
- 7 Moslem caliph

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Puzzle Solved:

49 Lcho	55 Tug
50 Elaborate meal	56 Menor
51 Ultimate	57 Comparison
52 — Bede—	58 Crude metal
53 Bat	
54 Cannon of Alps	

Rafsanjani: Iran can survive without oil

TEHRAN (R) — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said Friday Iran could survive even if its oil exports were cut off completely.

Responding to criticism over economic difficulties worsened by falling oil prices, he said foreign reports of Iran's woes were part of a "concerted propaganda campaign" inspired by the United States to dishearten the people and isolate Iranian officials.

"Even if our oil exports are halted we can continue, though naturally at a slower pace," he said at a mass prayer sermon.

Mr. Rafsanjani said free-market reforms and investment in infrastructural projects during Iran's first five-year economic plan which ends on March 20 had greatly reduced the country's decades-long reliance on crude oil export revenue.

"If this oil shock had happened five years ago it would have hurt us but it is not dangerous today," he said, referring to the 30 per cent fall in oil prices in 1993.

"So the shock they created to hurt us is now hurting their friends," Mr. Rafsanjani said.

Iran mainly blames North Sea producers Britain and Norway for the oil glut. The price fall has also hit pro-Western producers like Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Rafsanjani said he had information that U.S. officials, at a meeting of Western industrial countries, had argued that the danger from Iran came "not from Islamic fundamentalism, but its (economic) recovery" and everything must be done to stop it.

His economic assessment is at odds with that of parliament deputies and newspapers. They attribute spiralling prices and a slide in the value of the rial to depressed oil revenues.

Senior deputies say Iran's oil income in the year to March 20 would not exceed \$12 billion, falling \$5 billion short of target.

They say Iran could expect to get no more than \$12 for each barrel of oil next year instead of \$14 as assumed in Rafsanjani's proposed budget.

Non-oil exports fetched about \$3 billion in the last Iranian year. Mr. Rafsanjani said the real figure was closer to \$5 billion because exporters understated their value.

The president said the problems Iran faced were not extraordinary for a country that "wants to lock horns with the most Satanic powers on earth."

He branded some of the critics as publicity-seekers who magnified problems to grab headlines and rabble-rousers who "speak about 'the bones of the vulnerable strata being crushed' but cannot even spell 'bones' or 'vulnerable'."

Meanwhile, the head of the Iranian parliament's plan and budget committee was quoted as saying Friday that Iran would earn about \$14 billion in oil revenue in the year ending March 20, compared with a budget target of \$17 billion.

Iran's IRNA news agency said Qorbanali Dorri Najafabadi gave his estimate at a speech at Tehran's mass prayer meeting. It did not say on what price and export levels the estimate was based.

His figure was higher than the \$12 billion given by Mohammad Reza Bahonar, a member of the parliament's economy and finance committee, in a Tehran newspaper interview two weeks ago.

Mr. Bahonar had said Iran was receiving \$11 for each barrel of oil instead of the budgeted \$17.

Canada's jobless rate increases to 11.2%

OTTAWA (AFP) — Canada's jobless rate increased in December to 11.2 per cent, compared to 11 per cent in November, the government reported Friday. Statistics Canada said the December figures meant that the annual average unemployment rate in Canada was also 11.2 per cent in 1993, compared to 11.3 per cent in 1992. But the number of workers forced to take what it termed "involuntary part-time employment," where workers were forced to take part-time positions, jumped from 669,000 in 1992 to 760,000 last year.

Lebanese prime minister invests \$125m in rebuilding

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's billionaire Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri has paid \$125 million to buy shares in the company that will rebuild war-shattered central Beirut, a senior aide said Friday.

The announcement came as Lebanese clamoured for shares in the \$650 million offer by the Lebanese Company for the Development and Reconstruction of Beirut Central District (Solidere), despite reports the offer was already oversubscribed.

Mustapha Za'atari, head of the "Hariri Foundation," said the prime minister had placed \$125 million for Solidere shares, seven per cent of its total authorised capital of \$1.82 billion.

The maximum investment permitted to a single individual or institution is 10 per cent. Mr. Hariri, who made his

fortune in Saudi Arabia, had vowed to invest in the project to encourage investors and give the scheme more credibility.

The revenue of his shares would be distributed among humanitarian, social, educational and charity institutions, Mr. Za'atari said.

Bankers said subscriptions in Solidere had picked up this week ahead of Monday's deadline.

"In the first few weeks there was hesitation but demand has risen sharply as the deadline approaches," said banker Ghazi Al Akil at Banque du Liban et D'outre-Mer.

He said subscriptions ranged from \$200 to \$250,000.

Nasser Chamaa, secretary general of Solidere's board of founders, said this week the offer would be oversubscribed.

He refused to give figures but sources at the \$1.82 billion company said they expected the total subscriptions to be between \$800 million and \$1 billion.

People subscribing at several banks said they were doing so because either they believed the project was profitable or they wanted to take part in Lebanon's reconstruction after the 1975-1990 civil war.

"I am investing \$5,000 just to say that I am taking part in the campaign to rebuild the country," Mohammad Al Hajj said as he handed his money over. "I will not regret it if I lose money as long as Lebanon recovers."

The Solidere flotation is Lebanon's biggest and one of the largest launched in the Middle East. It is restricted to Lebanese and Arab individuals and institutions.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET			
BIDDING BANK OFFERS			
TELEPHONE: 64210 / 64211			
ORDINARY MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 06/01/1994			
COMPANY'S NAME	TRADED VOLUME	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ABNA BANK	1,132,045	152.000	152.000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	519,047	6.930	7.280
BANK OF JORDAN	9,538	4.970	4.900
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	235,332	2.170	2.240
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	12,710	1.340	1.310
THE HOUSING BANK	189,309	5.500	6.180
JORDAN COMBUST BANK	109,283	1.710	1.800
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	25,280	4.420	4.850
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	85,225	5.000	5.000
JORDAN BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	99,525	4.500	4.500
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	770	7.500	7.700
WEST BANK DEVELOPMENT FOR HOUSING	1,235,202	2.010	2.010
ABNA BANK FOR INVESTMENT	331,410	1.250	1.250
JORDAN BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	1,971	3.400	3.940
PELHARIZIA INVESTMENT BANK	825	3.180	3.340
UNITED INSURANCE	227,225	2.720	2.870
JORDAN INSURANCE	215	1.830	1.800
JORDAN AMALIA INSURANCE	3,125	3.000	2.990
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	514,494	2.450	2.550
UNITED DISTRICT ELECTRICITY	12,130	1.350	1.400
ABNA INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	15,133	5.000	5.250
JORDANIAN HOTEL & TOURISM	10,520	2.000	2.000
JORDANIAN HOTEL & SPA COMPLEX	22,322	0.790	0.790
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO INVESTMENTS	207,662	4.250	4.400
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	32,189	1.450	1.730
REAL ESTATE & INVESTMENT TRADING	1,320	1.010	1.000
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	550	1.500	1.570
JORDAN PRESS PUBLICATION / ALNA	24,786	14.250	14.400
UNITED KIDNEY & CONCRETE HOTELS	284,424	2.380	2.500
ABNA BANK FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	311,226	3.440	3.500
ATTORNEY GENERAL / NATIONAL PORTFOLIO INVESTMENTS	85,022	1.750	1.830
JORDANIAN PORTFOLIO INVESTMENTS	85,022	1.750	1.830
THE JORDANIAN PORTFOLIO INVESTMENTS	101,282	1.750	1.830
FOR JORDAN HONORARY KILL	463,908	8.720	8.930
ABNA MANUFACTURING MANUFACTURING	12,058	7.730	7.150
JORDAN FIBER MANUFACTURING	78,751	2.510	2.850
ABNA CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	4,050	20.640	20.220
SOFTING & MEATING	78,751	2.510	2.850
ABNA INDUSTRIES	4,210	2.420	2.540
SOFTING & MEATING	78,751	2.510	2.850
ABNA INDUSTRIES	353,428	16.590	17.420
ABNA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	255,179	10.400	10.800
ABNA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	255,179	10.400	10.800
ABNA ALUMINUM INDUSTRY	62,166	1.400	1.880
JORDAN MEDICAL CORPORATION	19,501	0.800	0.800
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	20,942	5.200	5.400
INDUSTRIAL PERO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	70,583	2.300	2.300
JORDAN ROPEWORK INDUSTRIES	4,610	2.250	2.300
INDUSTRIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	8,000	7.800	8.000
ALUMINUM INDUSTRIES	735	4.490	4.700
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MANUFACTURING	58,095	2.180	2.240
JORDAN PROMOTING CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	14,901	0.370	0.380
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	104,144	8.300	8.700
JORDAN STEEL INDUSTRIES	113,221	3.500	3.550
JORDAN TUNING CO. FOR AGRI. & FOOD PROD.	61	1.400	1.400
KAUFER INVESTMENT	6,968	2.550	2.510
UNIVERSAL HOUSING INDUSTRIES	724,818	5.800	6.000
GRAND TOTAL	10,775,654		

Financial Markets

New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	31/12/93	7/1/1994	Percent Change
Sterling Pound	1.4770	1.4930	1.08 %
Deutsche Mark	1.7352	1.7275	0.62 %
Swiss Franc	1.4860	1.4660	1.50 %
French Franc	5.9190	5.8528	0.62 %
Japanese Yen	111.85	111.85	10.02 %

USD Per STG

Euro-Currency Interest Rates			
Currency	31/12/1993	7/1/1994	
U.S. Dollar	3.10	3.68	3.06
Sterling Pound	5.58	5.12	5.37
Deutsche Mark	6.06	5.06	6.00
Swiss Franc	4.19	3.59	3.93
French Franc	6.46	5.45	6.42
Japanese Yen	2.31	1.75	2.37

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding 1 U.S. Dollar, 1,000,000 or equivalent

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7040	0.7060
Sterling Pound	1.0503	1.0556
Deutsche Mark	0.4072	0.4092
Swiss Franc	0.4798	0.4822
French Franc	0.1196	0.1202
Japanese Yen*	0.6282	0.6313
Dutch Guilder	0.3641	0.3659
Swedish Krona	*****	*****
Italian Lira*	0.0416	0.0418
Belgian Franc	*****	*****

* Per 100

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.5250	1.8750
Lebanese Lira	0.040585	0.041675
Saudi Riyal	0.1875	0.1882
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3100	2.3650
Omani Riyal	0.19078	0.19205
Egyptian Pound	0.2050	0.2200
Qatari Riyal	1.7950	1.8220
UAE Dirham	0.19078	0.19203
Greek Drachma	0.2765	0.3245
Cypriot Pound	1.3325	1.3765

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Fire tornadoes tear through Sydney; death toll hits 4

SYDNEY (R) — Tornadoes of fire tore through parts of Sydney and its commuter towns Saturday, razing homes and forcing thousands of people to flee to beaches as the city's worst fire crisis blazed into its third day.

One person was killed in Sydney's south, bringing the death toll to four since bushfires started raging across New South Wales, Australia's most populous state, 10 days ago, police said.

At least 100 homes were on fire, many in the Sutherland area to the city's south and the Pittwater district in the north. Thousands of people were being evacuated in the city's southern and northern districts as well as in the Blue Mountains west of the city and in the Gosford area to the north.

Radio reports that people were trapped in homes could not be confirmed but police said some residents were refusing to leave their homes despite the danger.

"We have firestorm activity being recorded... By that I don't mean storms in the conventional sense but fire behaviour that develops its own tornado-like activity," said Phil Robson, a Bushfire Headquarters spokesman.

"In those areas the fire behaviour is so extreme that firefighters are withdrawing from

areas where fire is burning through and will return when it is safe," Mr. Robson said.

Hot winds gusting to 70 kph (44 mph) sent firefighters running for their lives as over 150 fires were fanned into infernos across New Wales state.

To Sydney's north, the city of Gosford, with a regional population of some 250,000, was blanketed by thick black smoke as a massive fire roared into the city and residents in several areas were ordered to evacuate their homes.

A helicopter was on its way to evacuate Gosford Hospital. "We are urging them to make for open spaces and to make for the beaches," said local Fire Brigade Chief John Costello.

"We are not saying they should panic but things are not looking good," he said. As winds swung wildly, dozens of fires in Sydney whipped lethally from one suburb to another, forcing evacuations.

One huge fire marched towards Sydney's northern beaches, where boat owners desperately hosed down yachts.

Others loaded boats with belongings and sailed out to safer waters as million-dollar homes on the Pittwater on Broken Bay, 30 kilometres north of the city, burst into flames.

Officials said about 44 houses were alight in the area. Even houses on islands were not safe as embers blew across the water, sparking fires and exploding one house on Scotland Island in Broken Bay.

Fires also surrounded the nearby Hawkesbury River community of Brooklyn, cutting off the only road exit. The 800 residents were ordered to assemble at a local park for evacuation by water.

"I think I'll be putting the family on the punt and heading out into the river," said Oyster farmer Ray Johnson as he gathered with his wife and children.

Several hundred elderly people were evacuated by bus from local nursing homes and children at a fitness camp were moved as fires moved towards Narrabeen Beach in the north. Sydney's wooded northern suburbs of Lane Cove, Terry Hills, Kilara and West Chatswood were again burning as old fires flared and new ones ignited. A country club and a nursing home were reported to be on fire but no injuries were reported.

In the south of the city around Menai fires engulfed a school and a block of apartments.

As evening fell, ash, embers and burnt leaves rained down

on the city and the sky was enveloped in a grey haze. Visibility in places was reduced to metres and cars were forced to turn on headlights in the late afternoon.

Officials said the downtown district was not in danger but the fires were causing major power surges throughout the city as the blazes destroyed power lines around the city.

To the west of Sydney, the densely populated Blue Mountains area was being evacuated as a major blaze tore through the deep gullies and ravines. The Great Western Highway linking Sydney with the mountains was closed.

One journalist defending his mountain home said the fire periodically exploded as it found fresh deposits of fuel.

More than 500,000 hectares (1.25 million acres) of bush have been burned since the fires began.

About 20 main roads have been cut around the state, major rail lines have been shut down, and tens of thousands of people have been stranded.

There were no official estimates of the cost of the damage to homes and property. "We've never had to face fires of this magnitude in Australia," said Phil Koperberg, director of Bushfire Service for New South Wales.



Fire engulfs the recycling plant in Sydney's northern suburb as a firestorm swept through the area (AFP photo)

Pretoria, ANC slam Inkatha poll stand

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South Africa's ruling National Party accused the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party Saturday of resorting to blackmail by saying it would boycott all-race elections unless its demands for regional autonomy were met.

"The National Party has bent over backwards to accommodate Inkatha and the Freedom Alliance (FA) but they appear to be resorting to blackmail," the party said in a statement.

Inkatha is a crucial member of the FA, a group of conservative black leaders and propounders of the route taken by democracy negotiators and the interim constitution which will be used to govern South Africa for the next five years.

The NP, led by reformist President F. W. de Klerk said: "There is however a great danger that Inkatha and the FA are putting themselves in a corner should they resort to a strategy of blackmail."

"Initially Inkatha and FA used delay tactics in the negotiations to achieve their goals. Now it appears they are resort-

ing to blackmail by making acceptance of their proposals a requirement for their participation in the elections," it added.

Inkatha, led by chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, said Friday it would not participate in the country's first all-race elections on April 27, but left the door open to further negotiations.

Inkatha said it would reconsider if its demands for greater regional powers and fiscal autonomy were met by the government and its arch-rivals, the African National Congress (ANC).

Mr. Buthelezi's party said only the acceptance of the FA proposals for greater regional powers and fiscal autonomy handed to the government and Nelson Mandela's ANC in December "will enable Inkatha to reconsider its stand."

The alliance's demands include the right of regions to make and amend their own constitutions, fiscal autonomy for regions and a dual ballot system for local and national bodies.

"The NP will consider Inkatha and FA's proposals on merit. Although we would like

to see all parties take part in the election, we shall not allow ourselves to be blackmailed in the process," Mr. De Klerk's party said.

The ANC said it regretted Inkatha's decision and added in a statement: "The ANC remains committed to negotiations with all parties to ensure the process is as inclusive as possible."

It also said: "All South Africans and the entire world expect the democratic process and elections of the 27th of April to go ahead as scheduled. There can be absolutely no question of reviewing the election date."

Inkatha has been holding bilateral talks with the government and the ANC and is due to meet them again before Jan. 24.

In an attempt to draw the alliance into the democracy process, the government and the ANC have agreed to conservative calls for some strong regional powers, including policing and some taxation.

But the ANC has been adamant that the FA's demand for virtual autonomy should not be met.

Bosnia, Croatia peace talks postponed

BONN (R) — Relentless Bosnian Serb shelling of Sarajevo prevented Bosnia's Muslim President, Alija Izetbegovic, from flying to Bonn Saturday for a peace summit with his Croatian counterpart, forcing a postponement of the meeting.

"The government of Bosnia-Herzegovina has just informed us that Sarajevo and the surroundings of the airport are under continuous Serbian artillery fire," a German Foreign Ministry statement said.

It said that all flights operated by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) from Sarajevo had been cancelled for Saturday. "For that reason President Izetbegovic, who depends on UNHCR flights to depart, cannot leave Sarajevo for the time being," the statement added.

The departure from Zagreb of Croatian President Franjo Tudjman was also delayed until it became clear whether Mr. Izetbegovic would be able to travel to Bonn, where the two sides had been due to hold ceasefire talks Saturday.

The Foreign Ministry, hosting the talks arranged hastily in Bonn after a surprise announcement by the two sides in Vienna Wednesday, said the Croatian and Bosnian presidents remained committed to holding the meeting as soon as possible.

"Both sides say that they still intend to hold their meeting at the Petersberg at the earliest time possible," the statement said. Petersberg is a luxurious official guesthouse on a hilltop overlooking the Rhine on the outskirts of Bonn.

A ministry spokesman said he had no indication yet as to when flights from Sarajevo might resume.

The Bonn summit, where Mr. Tudjman and Mr. Izetbegovic were due to be joined by international mediators Lord Owen of Britain and Thorvald Stoltenberg of Norway, was seen as crucial to making progress civil war at negotiations in

Geneva later this month.

The Geneva talks due to resume on Jan. 18 include Bosnia's dominant Serbs, deemed by the United Nations to be the main aggressors in the 21-month-old war.

Apart from ending hostilities between Bosnian Croats and Muslim-led Bosnian government forces in central and southern parts of the country, other items on the Bonn agenda were Muslim access to the Adriatic Sea, the status of the central city of Mostar and Muslim access to the northern River Sava.

The Serbian bombardment of Sarajevo prompted a swift condemnation from the U.N. Security Council. On Saturday, a parliamentary deputy of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats said Germany must push for Western air strikes to stop the shelling.

"Air strikes on Serbian artillery positions around Sarajevo must end the suffering of the people trapped in that hell," said Heribert Scharrenbroich, a member of parliament's Human Rights Committee.

Two people were killed and 10 were injured when two shells hit Serb-besieged Sarajevo Saturday, a Reuters journalist said. "One of the shells landed close to the city-centre residence of the commander of United Nations troops in Bosnia, General Francis Briquembourg of Belgium."

Serb-Muslim fighting in the besieged city Friday killed six people and wounded 27, hospital and Serb sources said.

At the United Nations, the Security Council, in a formal meeting, condemned "the continuing military pressure on (Sarajevo) and the relentless bombardment (of the city) by Bosnian Serb forces."

The Council's statement late Friday came after Russia elicited a report from U.N. officials that Bosnian Muslims had helped provoke the bombardments by shelling Serb dis-

tricts.

But Undersecretary-General Chinmaya Gharekhan, a close aide to Secretary-General Boutros Ghali, told Council members that the Serb response was out of all proportion to any provocation, according to diplomats at his briefing.

Shortly before the meeting, Britain's U.N. ambassador, Sir David Hannay, said U.S. and British envoys in Belgrade told Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic the "bombing was totally unproductive" and there should be a return to negotiating a settlement.

In response, Mr. Milosevic said he would talk to Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic about the targeting of the centre of Sarajevo, but his control over Bosnian Serbs was limited, diplomatic sources reported.

Elsewhere in the beleaguered republic, local media reported continued fighting on the battlefronts, mainly between Muslims and Croats.

Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic Friday called for mediator Lord Owen to resign, accusing him of favouring the establishment of a greater Serbia.

Mr. Silajdzic, in Bonn for ceasefire talks Saturday between the Bosnian and Croatian presidents, told N-TV television that Lord Owen favoured Serbia, even though everyone agreed it was the principal aggressor in the war.

"After what he has said, I think he should resign... He has shown with his words that he doesn't want there to be a Bosnia. They want a greater Serbia," Mr. Silajdzic said, according to a German translation of his comments.

Mr. Silajdzic appeared to be referring to Lord Owen's remark in Vienna Tuesday that all three warring parties seemed "quite content to fight."

IRA: No peace deal without clarification

BELFAST (R) — Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams warned Saturday that Britain and Ireland must clarify their Northern Irish peace plan or face the prospect of another 25 years of violence.

Mr. Adams, leader of the IRA's political wing, bluntly told Belfast's Irish news that the peace process was stuck.

"I said that always what I wanted at the end of this peace process was to end up with a package, a proposition which I can bring to the IRA leadership in which, hopefully, I can make definitive points which will lead them to change their campaign," he told the newspaper in an interview.

"I don't have such a package. I don't have such a proposition," Mr. Adams said he had written to British Prime Minister John Major and his Irish counterpart Albert Reynolds urging them to comply with "the reasonable demand for clarification" to the peace declaration they launched on Dec. 15.

He said it was up to them to bridge any gap between what was required and what was on offer, and warned: "If the Republic struggle needs to continue for the next 25 years, then so be it, we continue for the next 25 years."

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) has been fighting for a quarter of a century to end British rule over the province and reunite it with the Irish Republic to the South.

One-off Korean nuclear inspection is not enough, U.S. senators say

TOKYO (R) — American lawmakers said Saturday the United States will not accept a one-time inspection of North Korea's declared nuclear facilities but will demand access to suspect sites and even waste and disposal areas.

Two U.S. senators, Democrat Sam Nunn and Republican Richard Lugar, both experts on the North Korean situation, cautioned against over-optimism of a breakthrough in a tense dispute over nuclear inspection with the reclusive Stalinist state.

They also advised the governments in the U.S. and the North Pacific — Japan, South Korea, China and Russia — to begin preparing their people for possible sacrifices if the North was hit with economic sanctions for refusing to allow international inspection.

U.S. Undersecretary of State Lynn Davis raised hopes the inspection row was near settlement when he said in Washington Wednesday the North had agreed in negotiations with the U.S. to allow

inspections of seven declared nuclear sites.

The world community is concerned in particular about two nuclear waste dumps that could shed light on whether the isolated regime has produced nuclear weapons.

"The nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) clearly calls for inspections by the IAEA not only on a one-time basis but on a regular basis and on a spot basis, on any basis that is required to make certain that non-proliferation is obtained," Sen. Lugar told a news conference at the U.S. embassy in Tokyo.

Sen. Lugar and Sen. Nunn, who have spent the last week meeting Russian and Japanese leaders on the issue of nuclear non-proliferation, said U.S. negotiators dealing with North Korea would not settle for a compromise pact.

"There is, I think, a necessity not to be satisfied with some kind of compromise, modest agreement here," Sen. Nunn said.

"What kind of inspections (are we seeking)? My answer to that is whatever the technical people at IAEA believe is necessary to give assurance that there is not an ongoing effort to divert material that would allow North Korea to build nuclear devices," he said.

Sen. Nunn added that the inspection process must include suspect sites such as disposal and waste areas.

Sen. Nunn, head of the Senate's Armed Services Committee, and Sen. Lugar, a member of its Foreign Affairs Committee, said it was time to begin preparing Americans and the citizens of the North Pacific for possible repercussions in the event an uncooperative North Korea was slapped with economic sanctions.

"The North Korean leadership, I believe, has been quoted as saying that they are not going to stand by for even mild (economic) measures. That implies a degree of danger that we all ought to understand," Sen. Lugar said.

Rebels topple towers in states near Mexico City

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico (R) — Rebels who declared war a week ago on the Mexican government claimed responsibility Friday for the toppling of two electrical towers and vowed to move their fight into the capital city.

"Mission accomplished. The next move is to advance to Mexico City," the Zapatista National Liberation Army said in a communiqué sent to the Mexican Federal Electricity Commission.

The Zapatistas, who began their uprising on New Year's Day in the hilly southern state of Chiapas, said Friday they had toppled two 90-foot (30-metre) electrical towers late Thursday in the cities of Puebla and Uruapan, 160 kilometres east and 320 kilometres west, respectively, of Mexico City.

The destruction of the towers, which were knocked over with trucks, was the first indication the Zapatistas — who say they are fighting in Chiapas for indigenous rights — were ready to make good on a threat to expand the area of conflict.

Mexico City Airport officials told Reuters they had put their security forces on maximum alert at all of the country's airports because of fear of rebel operations.

"The airport is in a state of maximum alert. Because of the magnitude of the conflict, we are taking special care," said a spokesman for Mexico's air

traffic systems. The Federal Electricity Commission and state-owned Petroleos Mexicanos also said they stepped up security around their installations.

Riot police with bomb-sniffing dogs entered the Mexican Stock Exchange late Friday and workers were evacuated en masse, witnesses said.

Exchange workers said they were told over loudspeakers to evacuate the building following reports that a bomb was found on the seventh floor. No damage was reported and the operation had been a fire drill.

The Zapatistas, whom the government estimates number as many as 2,000 and are made up mostly of descendants of Maya Indians, launched a surprise raid on New Year's Day on six towns of Chiapas. Over the weekend they issued a communiqué saying they would advance on Mexico City.

More than 100 people — possibly as many as 400 according to church sources — have been killed in fighting in Chiapas, which borders Guatemala.

The Mexican attorney general's office issued a statement late Friday saying it had so far found no evidence Mexican soldiers had killed any of the peasants' execution-style, as some human rights advocates charged.

An examination of 30 dead from fighting in Ocosingo found that four had died of head wounds after being shot at close range. Ballistics tests showed three were not killed by arms carried by the soldiers, but the killer of the fourth had not been determined, the government said.

San Cristobal Bishop Samuel Ruiz, a human rights advocate, told reporters that some villagers had been pressed against their will into the duty by the military to serve as guides in the mountains and were forced to wear military uniforms.

Fighting was again reported in Chiapas Friday. Dozens of armed personnel carriers fitted with artillery cannons and backed up by helicopter gunships have pushed the peasant guerrillas away from cities and towns they had occupied in the mountains.

The rebels were suspected to have taken up positions in the mountain caves north of the colonial city, skirting around army convoys sent into disputed zones.

The army bombarded Tzucutez Mountain, the highest peak in Chiapas, Thursday and again Friday in what reporters returning from the scene said was a rocket-and-machine-gun strafing attack that lasted several hours.

Army planes have fired rockets and dropped small

bombs for three consecutive days at suspected rebel positions just outside San Cristobal forcing hundreds of civilians to flee their homes and take refuge in the city and nearby towns.

In San Cristobal, army units moved from house to house searching for rebel combatants.

The government said some 400 insurgents Thursday had opened fire on three reconnaissance aircraft and two helicopters carrying medical personnel and supplies and that the aircraft had been damaged.

It said government helicopters had attacked rebels who were preparing to sabotage microwave towers and television and radio antennas in the area.

President Carlos Salinas De Gortari said late Thursday that his government would consider pardoning some Zapatistas, who say they are fighting for indigenous rights, if they give up the guerrilla war against the government and army.

The Mexican government, faced with the first rural uprising in 20 years, blames "professionals of violence" for allegedly manipulating the extreme poverty of Chiapas' indigenous peoples to mount an insurgency. It says Guatemala and Salvadoran rebels have key posts in the Zapatista movement.

2 jailed in Spain for killing matadors

MURCIA, Spain (R) — A Spanish farmer and one of his farmhands were jailed for a total of 81 years each for shooting dead three youths who were practicing bullfighting by moonlight on their land. The Murcia High Court sentenced Manuel Costa and Jose Manuel Yepes to three separate terms of 27 years each for the murder of apprentice matadors Lorenzo Franco, Juan Carlos Rumbó and Andres Panduro on Dec. 1, 1990. The three youths entered Costa's farm near Cieza, southeast Spain, apparently following an old bullfighting tradition that young matadors should practice their art on calves or cows by the light of a full moon. Minutes later they were cut down by a total of 11 blasts from a shotgun. The court ordered that the case be kept open to investigate the possible involvement of a third person. During the trial Pedro Antonio Yepes, younger brother of the convicted farmhand and aged 15 at the time of the shootings, confessed to committing two of the murders.

Thieves snatch jewels in London new year sale

LONDON (R) — Two thieves posing as smart customers grabbed jewellery worth more than £1.5 million (\$2.2 million) from a top London store Friday, police said. An assistant at Bulgari's Jewellers in Harvey Nichols Department Store, in the exclusive Knightsbridge area, unlocked a gold necklace and diamond ring to show to the men, who picked them up and fled to a getaway car. Crowds of shoppers attracted to new year sales made their escape easier, police said.

Telly Savalas has prostate cancer — publicist

LOS ANGELES (R) — Actor Telly Savalas, famous for his role as the lollipop-sucking detective Kojak in the television series of the same name, is suffering from prostate cancer, his publicist said. Mike Mamakos said Savalas, who will be 70 on Jan. 21, was discharged from the Huntington Memorial Hospital in Pasadena last week after undergoing treatment for the cancer. "He is currently recuperating at his home in Universal City where his personal physician describes his condition as good, yet guarded," Mr. Mamakos said. He told Reuters he had a "gentlemen's agreement" with Savalas not to reveal the news of the actor's hospitalisation until Friday. Savalas, who starred as detective Theo Kojak in the CBS series which aired from 1973-78 has also taken starring roles in several major movies including Bird Man of Alcatraz, for which he was nominated for a Best Supporting Actor Academy Award in 1962. Known in the Kojak TV series for his chrome dome, Savalas first shaved his head to play Pontius Pilate in the 1965 film, The Greatest Story Ever Told, and kept it for The Dirty Dozen in 1967. Savalas has been married three times and has four children.

Actor arrested for shaking fist at police

MIAMI BEACH, Florida (AFP) — U.S. actor and real-life tough guy Mickey Rourke, star of 9½ Weeks and Diner, was arrested for shaking his fist at police during a ruckus outside his nightclub here, police said. Rourke, 39, was charged with resisting an officer Thursday but was released after posting \$500 bail. Police said they did not know what sparked the confrontation between the actor and boxing enthusiast and a crowd of about 75. The brouhaha took place outside Rourke's nightclub. Rourke was arrested after he shouted insults and refused to leave the scene as police had ordered, officials said. If convicted of resisting an officer, Rourke could be sentenced to one year in prison and fined \$1,000.

Penny-pinching modern magi leave no gifts

BRUSSELS (R) — Three wise men visited an optician in Antwerp but instead of leaving gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, they raided his cash till. Youths dressed as the Biblical magi — Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar — presented themselves at the optician in the Antwerp suburb of Deurne, and even struck up a seasonal song, police said.

Azeris press strongly against Armenians

MOSCOW (R) — Azerbaijan reported fresh successes in its efforts to recapture lost territory from Armenian forces Saturday in the latest spiral of a six-year war between the two former Soviet republics.

An Azerbaijan Defence Ministry official said the army had won back the southern rail junction of Goradiz and was pursuing fleeing Armenians down the road to Fizuli, farther north.

He said fighting was going on in the eastern outskirts of Agdam on the edge of the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh enclave. Armenians captured the town last July but have come under increasing pressure in recent days from the Azeri side.

Azerbaijan's Turan News Agency said the country's forces had killed more than 250 Armenian soldiers and captured or destroyed large

amounts of heavy weaponry in the fighting around Agdam. Each side frequently exaggerates the other's losses, however.

Many thousands of people have been killed since conflict flared in 1988 over Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountainous enclave surrounded by Azerbaijan which is nominally ruled but has a majority Armenian population.

Death toll in Togo fighting rises to 58

LOME (R) — Togo police said 58 people died in what the government alleges was an attempted attack by Ghanaian-backed Togolese dissidents on the president but Ghana says was probably a feud within the Togolese army.

A police statement broadcast on television Friday night said 16 bodies had been found on the city's northern outskirts, adding to 42 dead announced earlier.

Of the total, 32 were gunmen killed in clashes with security forces in Wednesday's attack on President Gnassingbe Eyadema's limousine and Lome's main army base, the

police said. Military strongman Eyadema was not in the armoured Mercedes car at the time, nor at his quarters in the army base.

Seven of the dead were Togolese military and 19 were civilians, killed when they refused to hand over their vehicles or simply got in the raiders' way, the statement said.

Security officials say they captured 35 of the attackers and police allowed journalists to talk to three Togolese they said were among the raiding party.

"We were more than 50 who tried to enter Lome, where we

were told before leaving Ghana that the object of our mission was to capture the head of state, General Gnassingbe Eyadema," one of the prisoners said Friday.

Togo's Foreign Minister Ouattara Natchaba said the raid was carried out by Ghana-based supporters of exiled opposition leader Gilchrist Olympio and a second assault, on Togolese border guards, was launched from Ghana Thursday night.

"The attack came from Ghana, it came from a commando operating from Ghana as usual," he told Radio France Internationale Friday.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Nyberg wins giant slalom

KRANJSKA GORA, Slovenia (AFP) — Sweden's Fredrik Nyberg stormed back from sixth after the first leg to snatch his first World Cup victory since 1990 in the giant slalom here Saturday. Italy's Matteo Belfrond was second, 0.12 sec. behind Nyberg. Germany's Tobias Bamneros was third. Norway's Kjetil Andre Aamodt, who headed the field after the first leg, lost his rhythm and his goggles in a ragged second run. Barely able to see in the rainy conditions, he slipped to ninth place and lost his place at the top of the overall World Cup standings to Austria's Gunther Mader. Mader, second after the first leg, tied for fifth place with Slovenian Mitja Kunc. Slalom specialist Alberto Tomba's hopes of closing the gap on Mader and Aamodt were dashed when the Italian missed a gate mid-way through his run on the first leg.

Women's Super-G called off

ALTENMARKT, Austria (R) — A women's Alpine skiing World Cup super-G race was called off for safety reasons Saturday after several racers had fallen. "We can no longer guarantee the safety of the racers and the race has been abandoned, with no winners," said jury chairman Kurt Hoch. He said it was still planned that Sunday's slalom would go ahead. The decision to call off the event was taken after six of the first 32 racers had crashed off the Kalberleit Course in the treacherous Panaroma Curve and several others fell after being unable to stop in the finish area. "The finish has become too fast due to the falling temperature and the racers are unable to stop properly," Hoch said. The first to crash on the curve — a sharp left-hand turn followed immediately by a right-angle right turn, was Norway's Astrid Loeidemel, who flew into the protective barrier. She was carried down the slope on a stretcher and taken to hospital with an injury to ligaments in her right knee.

Legia Warszawa coach leaves for UAE

WARSAW (R) — Janusz Wojcik has quit as coach of leading Polish club Legia Warszawa to take charge of the United Arab Emirates Olympic team. Polish news agency (PAP) said Saturday. Wojcik, 40, led Legia to the Polish League championship last season but the club was stripped of the title over a bribery scandal. Poland also won the silver medal at the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona under his leadership. Wojcik, who was last month passed over for the vacant job of coach to Poland's national squad, left Poland Friday to start a two-year contract, PAP said. It quoted Legia officials as saying they had asked Wojcik's assistant, Pawel Janas, to replace him but he had not yet responded to the offer.

German captain marries

BOLE, Switzerland (AFP) — Lothar Matthaeus, captain of the German national soccer team married his longtime companion Lolita Moreno, a former Miss Switzerland and now a television presenter. The couple, who have a child, were married in the town hall at Bole in western Switzerland, Ms. Moreno's home village.

Celtic poised to move house

GLASGOW, Scotland (AFP) — Celtic will make a "major announcement" on a move from Parkhead to a new stadium in Glasgow soon, Chairman Kevin Kelly promised. Kelly said the debt-ridden club have the necessary funds to make the project viable. A 52,000 seat stadium at Cambuslang in south-east Glasgow has been planned for two years. But the start of the £100 million (\$150 million) project has been held up for a variety of reasons. Kelly said: "We've got to the stage where we know we've got the backing. We know we've got the funding. It's just a case of when we make the major announcement." Team manager Lou Macari said he wants to stay at the current stadium, Parkhead. Macari, who began his playing career at Parkhead, said: "I phoned the chairman and I'm assured that if it goes ahead it will be beneficial to me and the club. But I want to stay here. This is our spiritual home."

Maleeva pulls out of hardcourt meet

BRISBANE (R) — Top-seeded Magdalena Maleeva was forced to withdraw from the Australian Women's Hardcourt Championships Saturday after suffering severe dehydration in heatwave conditions. The Bulgarian 18-year-old was in hospital for three hours Friday night after complaining of headaches and weakness. She was forced to forfeit her semifinal against Argentina's Florencia Labat, the 11th seed, as temperatures once again soared in Brisbane. "I am very disappointed this happened because I was playing very well," said Maleeva in a prepared statement. "I took every precaution but it happened anyway," added the world number 16-ranked player who was given fluids intravenously in hospital. Earlier this week, Maleeva warned about the dangers of playing in such sweltering temperatures. Temperatures on court have reached over 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit) this week as the rebound ace surface absorbed the heat. Sunday's final will

be between Labat and America's Lindsay Davenport, who beat Taipei's Shi-Ting Wang 6-2, 6-4 in the other semifinal.

All Russian final in men's hardcourt

ADELAIDE, Australia (AFP) — The climax of the Australian Hardcourt Championship final Sunday will be an all-Russian affair after Yevgeny Kafelnikov stormed into his first tour final. Kafelnikov, ranked 102, humbled Australia's last hope Patrick Rafter 6-1, 7-5 in just under 80 minutes to book a final clash with Alexander Volkov. Volkov, the fourth seed, ousted Swedish titleholder Nicklas Kulti in three sets in the other semifinal. After prolonged rain Friday, the championship was forced to schedule two quarterfinals Saturday with Kulti having to resume his overnight match against Frenchman Guillaume Raoux. Kulti resumed leading 2-1 in the second set having taken the first in a tie-breaker. He maintained the pressure on Raoux to win the second set 6-3 and advance to a semifinal showdown with Volkov. Volkov clinically disposed of Danish player Kenneth Carlsen in straight sets and returned to wear down Kulti late in the afternoon. The Russian came from behind to win 4-6, 6-3, 6-3 to set up the ATP Tour's first ever all-Russian final.

Narrow win for Graf in Hong Kong

HONG KONG (R) — World number one Steffi Graf warmed up for this month's Australian Open with an important psychological victory over second-ranked Arantxa Sanchez Vicario in the final of an exhibition tournament Friday. Graf battled back from the brink of defeat to beat the Spaniard 7-5, 6-7 (5-7), 7-5 in a match contested far more keenly than most show games in the run-up to the Australian Open starting in Melbourne on Jan 17. Graf trailed 5-4 in the deciding set but two breaks of serve gave her a confidence-boosting win in just over two hours. "I did not want to play that long," Graf said. "It was a close match — a little bit up and down for me. I have not played outdoors for a while so this was very necessary before Melbourne. It was a good warm up really."

Ferreira defeats McEnroe in Hawaii

HONOLULU (AP) — Top-seeded Wayne Ferreira of South Africa served 14 aces on the way to defeating No. 8 Patrick McEnroe 6-4, 6-4 to advance to the semifinals of the Hawaii Open. Ferreira meets No. 5 Jonathan Stark, a 7-6 (7-4), 7-6 (7-5) winner over No. 4 Brad Gilbert, in Saturday's semifinals. In other quarterfinal action, No. 2 Richey Reneberg defeated No. 7 Rocco Pietrangeli 6-4, 6-2 and Robbie Weiss downed Jimmy Arias 6-0, 2-6, 6-3. "I served really well and he didn't put me under that much pressure on my service games," Ferreira said. "Serving a lot of aces like that makes it easier to put pressure on his service game."

Blair wins U.S. speedskating event

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Bonnie Blair skated the fifth-fastest 500 metres ever, streaking past her competition in the U.S. Olympic speedskating trials with a blistering time of 39.59 seconds. Blair, the only woman to win consecutive Olympic gold medals in the 500, skated the fastest time ever outside of Calgary's Olympic Oval. Blair set the world record of 39.10 in the 1988 Winter Olympics at Calgary, and Friday's time was her best since then. A favourite to strike gold again in the Winter Olympics at Lillehammer, Norway next month, Blair also broke the Petit National Ice Centre record of 39.76, she set last weekend. Blair has set track records at the year-old Petit Centre in each of her six races during the trials: Three times in the 500; twice at 1,000 metres and once at 1,500 metres. Peggy Clasen was the second-fastest American in Friday's 500, finishing in 41.47. However, China's Ye Qiaobo, Blair's bitter rival, skated a 40.87 in an international time trial.

Courier relaxed after break

ADELAIDE, Australia (AP) — A relaxed Jim Courier, fresh from a break from tennis over Christmas, arrived in Adelaide Saturday for the defence of the Rio Challenge title he has won for the last two years. The world's third-ranked player and defending Australian Open champion said he was in good condition and confident about winning three straight Australian crowns in Melbourne beginning Jan. 17. "All I've got to do is go and hit some tennis balls and then see what happens," the 23-year-old American said. "I am just here to get some matches in and hopefully play well and take some good form into Melbourne. The winning is something I can't control, I just go out there and play, and if I play well then maybe I can win." The Rio Challenge, a six-man exhibition tournament, will pit Courier against the likes of Sweden's Stefan Edberg, Croatia's Goran Ivanisevic and emerging Australian Patrick Rafter.

Ritsma breaks 1,500m speedskating record

HAMAR (R) — Dutchman Rintje Ritsma broke the 1,500 metres speed skating world record Saturday when he clocked one minute 51.60 seconds in the European Championships at the indoor rink in Hamar. Former East German Andre Hoffmann set the previous record of 1:52.06 at the 1988 Calgary Olympics.

Everton gets new manager

LONDON (R) — Mike Walker was appointed manager of struggling English Premier League club Everton a few hours after quitting as Norwich boss.

After meeting Everton chief executive Jim Greenwood, Walker was offered a three-and-a-half year contract. Everton, without a manager or a win since Howard Kendall left on Dec. 4, had been anxious to discuss the possibility of a move with Walker, but Norwich Chairman Robert Chase refused to let him talk to them.

Chase's stance prompted Walker to resign and he immediately sent a fax to Greenwood saying he was interested in an interview for the club's vacant managerial position.

But furious Norwich said they would be making an official complaint to the Football Association that Everton

"poached" Walker.

Chase said: "We feel Everton have effectively induced Mike Walker to take this action and we will be sending an official written complaint to the F.A. and the Premier League."

"I have got to know Mike very well over the past few months and it surprises me that anyone would walk away from a football club a day before an important game."

Norwich was to play Wycombe in the third round of the F.A. Cup Saturday.

Walker, who guided unfashionable Norwich to a surprise UEFA Cup win over Bayern Munich earlier this season, said he was looking forward to the challenge of managing one of the biggest clubs in the country.

John Deehan, Walker's assistant, has been appointed caretaker manager at Norwich.

Kerrigan hopes attack will not kill her Olympic dream

DETROIT (R) — U.S. figure skating champion Nancy Kerrigan said her sights were still on the 1994 Winter Olympics despite being smashed in the knee by an assailant, who if he had hit her one inch lower might have crippled her.

"Right now my focus is to get better," Kerrigan said Friday after suffering a deep bruise on her right knee from being hit with a night stick after practice Thursday.

"And hopefully, if I'm chosen, get ready for the Olympics."

Kerrigan was forced to withdraw from the national Championships because of the injury but may still be named to the Olympic team by a special U.S. committee.

Fighting back tears as she faced dozens of reporters and camera crews, Kerrigan said she cried when doctors told her Friday morning she could not compete in the championships.

"I kept crying and it was hard," she said. "I wanted to keep jumping (in front of the doctors) but the knee was really sore."

"I've been skating so well," said Kerrigan, determined to make up for a disappointing fifth-place showing at last year's World Championships in Prague. "I've trained really hard and I'm skating the best I've ever skated."

"The doctors think I'll be ready (for the Olympics)," Kerrigan said. "The psychological effects of the attack would be difficult to shake."

"It's hard to say how long I'll look over my shoulder to see what's behind me," Kerrigan said.

"It could have been career-ending if it would've been an inch lower. There would have been much more damage, and

I might not have been able to walk."

Dr. Mahlon Bradley said Kerrigan, 24, had no fracture. He said doctors drained a lot of blood from her knee Friday and wrapped it in an ace bandage.

The U.S. International Committee will convene immediately after Saturday's finals to decide on the two women to select for the singles competition in Lillehammer.

Kerrigan is expected to be placed on the team along with the winner of the nationals, while the second-placed skater is expected to be made the alternate. If selected, a decision on whether Kerrigan is fit to compete would not have to be made until just before the games.

The attack on Kerrigan, coming only eight months after tennis star Monica Seles was stabbed in Germany, shocked many of her colleagues and skating coaches and sent police scrambling to find the assailant.

He was described as a light-skinned black man, who was wearing a dark coat and hat, and had some form of credentials to enter the skating arena. The hunt for him was encompassing Canada and several U.S. states.

"We never even thought about it here even after the Monica Seles thing," said Carol Heiss-Jenkins, a 1960 Olympic medalist and coach for several other skaters. "We never thought it would happen in figure skating."

"It's obvious that things have changed a little bit," Heiss-Jenkins said. "We've changed. All of the sudden we've become very protective."

Kerrigan said she never saw

her attacker because he came from behind just as she passed through a curtain leading away from the practice rink.

"I was getting off the ice and went through the curtains," Kerrigan said. "I must have heard something and I turned and saw somebody running toward me. He hit me with this long black stick and kept on running."

"It was one good whack," Kerrigan said she thought the attack was a deliberate attempt to keep her from skating. "To smash my knee seemed pretty deliberate to me," she said.

Bradley said Kerrigan will undergo a magnetic resonance imaging scan Monday in Boston to determine the extent of the damage, but said she could heal in time for the Olympics.

Kerrigan's coach, Evi Scott-vold, said Kerrigan is "very determined" to skate in the Olympics.

"We cannot let a vicious criminal prevent her from the team if she is able to go," he said. "Nancy will be determined as ever but she will be frightened for a long time."

Kerrigan's mother, Brenda Kerrigan, said through tears that she was "angered" by the attack.

"I can't believe that one human being deliberately, deliberately hurt her," Mrs. Kerrigan said, breaking down in tears.

Athletes voice shock

Edberg playing 'well enough' to win Australian Open

DOHA (R) — Stefan Edberg boosted his hopes of winning a third Australian Open title when he crushed Henri Leconte in the quarterfinals of the Qatar Open Friday.

"I think I am playing well enough to win in Australia," said third-seeded Edberg after his 6-4, 6-2 victory. "I'm playing as well now as I have done for some time."

Goran Ivanisevic, the only other seed to survive to the quarterfinal stage, also had a comfortable passage into the last four.

The fourth-seeded Croatian beat Italy's Stefano Pescosolido 6-4, 6-4 in little over an hour. He will now meet Paul Haarhuis of the Netherlands, a 6-4, 6-2 winner over Russia's Andrei Olhovskiy.

Edberg, who meets Austrian Gilbert Schaller in the semifinals, said he had been playing "pretty well" for the past three months.

Leconte lashed out at the standard of linesmen here after he disputed a series of calls.

"We all know we will have

Seles, sidelined since being stabbed last April at a tournament in Hamburg, Germany, Friday called for an end to senseless violence in the wake of Thursday's attack on Kerrigan.

Seles, who announced Thursday that she was not ready to return for the Australian Open, issued a statement through her representatives at the International Management Group.

"Nancy Kerrigan is an ice skater. I am a tennis player. Crimes against us are more public but no more tragic than what happens to too many innocent victims every day. My thoughts are with Nancy, and I sympathize with the shock and horror she and other victims of senseless crimes experience."

"My hope is that this kind of terrible incident will focus society as a whole on something we can all do to stop senseless violence against innocent victims."

Former world and Olympic figure skating gold medalist Katarina Witt was shocked by the attack on Kerrigan. Witt's agent said Friday.

"Her first reaction was 'terrible, this is terrible,'" said Elizabeth Gottmann, Witt's agent. "She was shocked and saddened, and she hopes there are no permanent or serious injuries to Nancy."

Witt herself wasn't available for comment.

some bad calls. But I have had problems all week both in the singles and doubles," said the Frenchman.

"The linesmen here have to be more positive and not wait before they make a call." But Leconte admitted Edberg had been just too good for him.

Looking ahead to the Australian Open later this month, he said: "I think Stefan has the game to win another Grand Slam event."

Ivanisevic was also in a critical mood, hitting out at the organisers for making him play a doubles immediately after his match with Pescosolido.

"I have had enough tough matches this week and I wasn't happy about it... but they don't care."

"If I had played just one match today, I would be fresher to meet Haarhuis tomorrow. He killed me the last time we played in Tokyo but this is a different surface so it should be an interesting match."

Electronic tennis comes closer to acceptance

PERTH, Australia (AFP) — Like it or not, electronics appear certain to make most officials on the tennis court redundant.

That was the message from the Hopman Cup mixed teams' tournament here, the first international competition to use a revolutionary new line call system throughout.

"Not everyone enthused about the Tennis Electronic Lines (TEL). But the consensus among players and administrators was that, despite a few hiccups, the system developed by an Australian company TEL Pty Ltd. represents the future."

Hopman Cup director Paul McNamee said it would probably be used here again next year and further tests seem likely before then.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the winners of the tournament

gave the revolutionary technology a ringing endorsement.

"It gave me no problems all week," said world No. 12 Petr Korda. "I rate it very successful."

Korda's partner in the Czech Republic's team, Jana Novotna, admitted it had seemed strange to see so few officials by the court. "I suppose we need time to adjust to it. But I have no complaints," she said.

South African Marcus Ondruska was another convert. "There were a couple of really close calls in our matches and I found the machine to be very accurate," he enthused.

"It was quiet, nobody to argue with." The system involves the use of balls with fine metal powder embedded in the rubber casing. When the ball passes over the baseline, a machine emits a loud beep.

We advise you to visit
Al Dail Establishment
Inside the Forte Grand Hotel
★ For information, the price of an embroidered cushion is JD 12

GOREN BRIDGE
WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANMAN HIRSH
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HOW'S THAT AGAIN?

North-South vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ 7 3
♥ 5 2
♦ K 7 2
♣ A Q J 5 2

EAST
♠ 10 9 6 4 2
♥ K 8 5
♦ K 8 7 4
♣ J 10 8 3

SOUTH
♠ A K J
♥ A 9 8 3
♦ A 9 5 4
♣ 7 4

The bidding:
South West North East
1 NT Pass 3 NT Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Four of ♠

There are some people out there who like nothing better than catching a bridge authority in an unguarded remark. We were trapped when someone showed us the club combination in the North-South hands and asked us how it should be played. "Finesse the jack," we responded. Of course, that's correct if you need four or five tricks in the suit. But what if you need only three?

The auction was routine. The modern theory is that, as long as three suits are stopped, a balanced hand qualifies for a one-no-trump opening bid, and that was South's choice. With a featureless 11 points, North had no interest in a minor-suit game and leaped straight to three no trump.

West's spade lead was won in the closed hand and, since there were only six fast tricks outside clubs, declarer had to develop that suit for three winners. So a club was led to the jack. East held up. Declarer came to hand with a diamond to repeat the club finesse, this time losing to East's king. There was only one entry to dummy and, since East still had a club stopper, declarer scored only two tricks in the suit and eight overall.

Since South can afford to lose two club tricks, the winning line is to force the defenders to take the first club. Declarer can accomplish that by leading a club at trick two and by ducking in dummy. Declarer came to hand with a diamond to repeat the club finesse, this time losing to East's king. There was only one entry to dummy and, since East still had a club stopper, declarer scored only two tricks in the suit and eight overall.

<p>CONCORD Tel.: 677420</p> <p>CONCORD '1' ASSASSIN Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30</p> <p>CONCORD '2' SENIOR WEEK Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5:15</p> <p>Hi America Play, 8:30</p>	<p>PLAZA Tel.: 699238</p> <p>Amr Diyab, Omar Sharif and Yusra in Laughter, Play, Seriousness and Love (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.</p>	<p>PHILADELPHIA Tel.: 634144</p> <p>DRAGON The Bruce Lee story Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 11 a.m. special show for children Thurs.-Fri.+Sat. and Sun. Ninja Dragons</p>	<p>Nabil Al Mashini Theatre Tel.: 675571</p> <p>presents a play entitled: AL Ilm Nuron A popular political comedy Actors: Abeer Issa, Daoud Jalajel, Hassan Al Shaer, Fuad Shomali in addition to other comedians Every night at 8:15 Tickets are sold all day</p>	<p>Nabil & Hisham's Tel.: 6251351 AHLAN THEATRE The political comedy WELCOME ARAB SUMMIT Daily 8:30 r.m. The theatre will resume shows as of January 12, 1994 English synopsis available</p>
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Pakistan minister warns of nuclear war

TASHKENT, Uzbekistan (R) — Warning of "immense danger," Pakistan Foreign Minister Asif Ali Zardari said on Saturday that nuclear war might engulf South Asia if his country's territorial dispute with India went unresolved. Mr. Ali told a news conference during a visit to the former Soviet republic of Uzbekistan that, unless Islamabad's dispute with Delhi of India's-held Kashmir was settled peacefully, war was possible. "Unless the Kashmir dispute is solved peacefully on the terms of international law and United Nations resolutions, there cannot be lasting peace in South Asia and there is always a danger of a fourth war in South Asia," Ali said. "And this time around, the concern of the world, the concern of South Asian countries and regional countries is that if a war takes place in South Asia it might become a nuclear war."

Qadhafi: NATO is a threat to peace

TRIPOLI (AFP) — Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Qadhafi has accused the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) of being a "threat to world peace, civilisation and humanity," the official Libyan news agency (JANA) reported Saturday. He accused Western powers, which formed NATO in 1949, of "colonising the world, provoking the two world wars and manufacturing the atomic and chemical bombs." NATO is to hold a summit in Brussels Monday and Tuesday with U.S. President Bill Clinton attending. Col. Qadhafi said Mr. Clinton was a victim of "Western colonialist circles and U.S. companies" who want to "compromise" him in foreign affairs and prevent him from being reelected to a second four-year term. The Libyan leader said in his Friday night speech that the 16-member "capitalist" Western alliance was leading the world to a catastrophe through its "scorn" of others.

Turk gets 26 years for BBC killing

ERBIL (AFP) — A court here Saturday convicted a Turkish guide of robbing and murdering two BBC freelance journalists in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq and sentenced him to 26 years in prison. Erbil criminal court found Hashim Jirki guilty of killing Charles Maxwell and Nick Della Casa as he took them across the Turkish-Iraqi border during the Kurdish uprising in northern Iraq in March 1991. The court sentenced Mr. Jirki to 20 years for the murders and an additional six years in prison for stealing their money and cameras. But it ruled there was not enough evidence to convict the 22-year-old guide of murdering Della Casa's wife Rossana. Her body was never found.

10 injured in bomb blast at Karachi

KARACHI (AFP) — A powerful bomb exploded in a parking area at the premises of the city court Saturday, injuring at least 10 people and damaging more than 20 motorbikes and several vehicles, police said. The bomb, which the bomb disposal squad chief Moeenuddin said had been planted on a motorbike, also shattered the windows of the court building. A magistrate, a soldier and a policeman were among the injured, ambulance and official sources said. Karachi is the capital of Pakistan's southern Sindh province, where troops have been deployed since June 1992 to maintain law and order. The official Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) quoted administration officials saying the bombing was an "act of sabotage carried out by trained terrorists."

Woman gets 10 years for court-room shooting

SONORA, California (AP) — A woman who fatally shot her young son's alleged molester in a courtroom was sentenced to 10 years in prison Friday by a judge who rejected pleas for clemency because the woman had cancer. Superior Court Judge William Polley sentenced Ellie Nesler to six years for voluntary manslaughter and an additional four years for using a gun to commit the crime. "This crime was in fact an execution," said Mr. Polley, who also denied Ms. Nesler's request for bail.

Judge suspends proceedings in PFLP case

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A judge on Friday suspended deportation proceedings against six people accused of raising funds for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the American Civil Liberties Union said. U.S. District Judge Stephen Wilson granted a preliminary injunction against the Immigration and Naturalization Service from deporting the six, who claim the effort against them is politically motivated. Mr. Wilson also barred the INS from using secret evidence against two of the aliens because the agency failed to show a pressing need for using undisclosed information, the ACLU said. Mr. Wilson's ruling bars the INS from deporting the aliens until the government can show that the deportation doesn't constitute selective prosecution, said attorney Mark van der Houst of the National Lawyers Guild.

Yeltsin sends Assad message on Mideast

DAMASCUS (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin sent Syrian President Hafez Al Assad a message Saturday dealing with the Arab-Israeli peace talks, co-sponsored by the United States and Russia. Officials said the message, also dealing with bilateral cooperation, was delivered by Russian Ambassador to Syria Alexander Zotov to Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharrat in Damascus. The message came eight days before a summit meeting between Mr. Assad and U.S. President Bill Clinton in Geneva.

More Russian Jews seek to emigrate

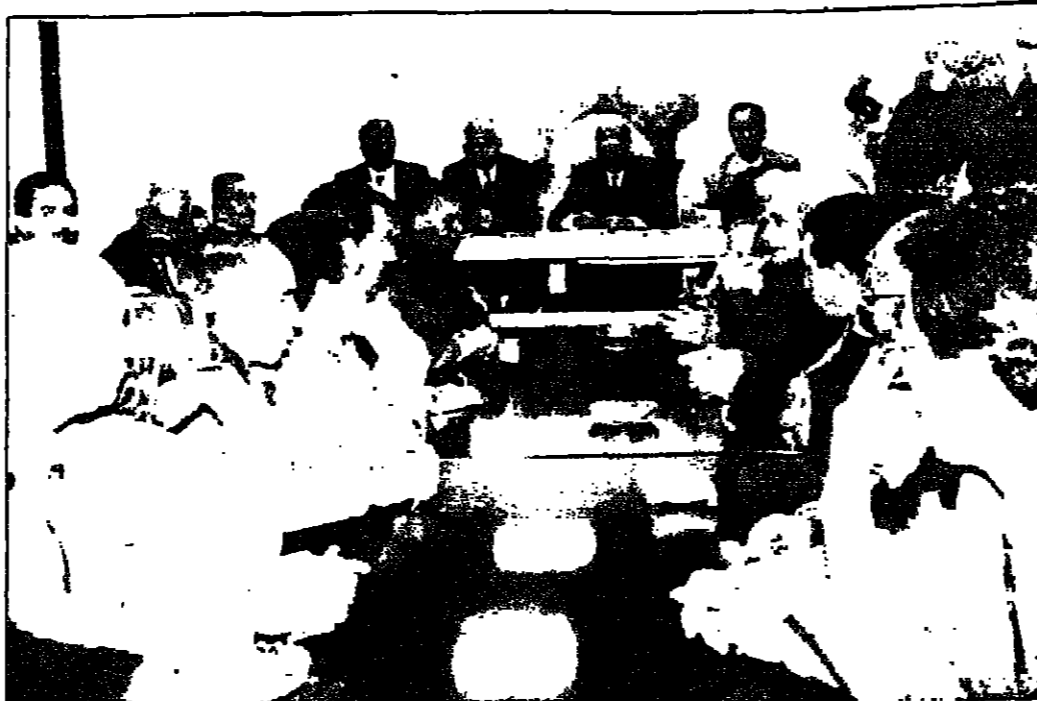
MOSCOW (AFP) — A growing number of Russian Jews have applied to emigrate to Israel following the electoral success of ultranationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, officials from the Far-Eastern Jewish autonomous region of Birobidjan said Saturday. The high score obtained by Mr. Zhirinovskiy's far-right Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in last month's legislative elections "has reinforced the wish to emigrate among the Jewish community," the Birobidjan Jewish community coordinating committee said, quoted by the Itar-Tass news agency. It gave no figures, but said there had been a "growing number of visa requests for Israel" since the Dec. 12 elections.

Two killed in sand fall in Egypt

CAIRO (R) — Two children were killed on Saturday when a pile of sand fell on them from the Moqattam hills, an escarpment on the edge of Cairo. The accident happened in the slum area of Manshiyet Nasser, in the same location where a rock weighing some 3,000 tonnes fell last month and buried at least 50 people, police said. Manshiyet Nasser is where Cairo's household rubbish is collected and burnt. The plateau above the escarpment was declared safe for housing in the 1960s and now has at least 250,000 inhabitants. The government has set up a committee including scientists to investigate the earlier accident and decide whether the plateau is safe.

Germany to start Somalia pullout this month

BONN (R) — Germany will begin withdrawing troops and military equipment from the U.N. peacekeeping force in Somalia this month, the defence ministry said on Saturday. A spokesman said the pullout would initially involve mostly military vehicles and material with the bulk of the 1,300 German troops starting to leave in February. The soldiers can be flown out from their northern base at Belet Huen, but their heavy equipment must be shipped out through Mogadishu, 300 kilometres to the south. German military experts have voiced concern that the troops could be ambushed during the withdrawal by Somali gangs seeking valuables like tanks, trucks or medicine.



REFORMISTS: Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi (centre), erstwhile chief Palestinian negotiator with Israel, Saturday meets with a group of Palestinian National Council members and other activists seeking reform in the Palestine Liberation Organisation's decision-making process (see story on page 1) Photo by Yousef Al Akran

Iraq puts U.N. sanctions death toll at 400,000

By Jerome Socolovsky
The Associated Press

NICOSIA — Nearly 400,000 Iraqis, one-third of them children under five years old, have died because of the U.N. sanctions imposed more than three years ago, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) said Saturday. The figures were released in a year-end report by the Health Ministry, the agency said in a dispatch monitored in Nicosia.

In addition to the 140,000 deaths among children, the ministry said it had registered more than 42,000 cases of malnutrition among children under five.

It said more than two million more had illnesses related to malnourishment caused by the sanctions.

There was no way to verify the Iraqi report. But independent Western relief workers and agencies have been warning for many months that Iraq's 18 million people faced disaster if conditions do not improve soon.

The report appeared to be part of a campaign by Iraq to convince the U.N. Security Council to lift the trade embargo clamped on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. INA said the embargo "is resulting in the death of inno-

cent children, women and elderly people, and has lost all of its justifications since Iraq has completely implemented all the unjust resolutions passed by the Security Council and the United Nations."

The embargo exempts food, medicine and other humanitarian goods. But few people can now afford what supplies do reach Iraq.

Although Baghdad has grudgingly allowed U.N. inspectors to monitor its weapons programme according to Security Council resolutions, sanctions were extended last November.

Following reports of renewed chemical attacks against rebels in southern Iraq, the Security Council ruled that it needed at least another six months to verify Iraq's full compliance.

The issue has split the council, with France demanding that oil sanctions be lifted once it is established that Iraq is complying.

The United States and Britain want to restrict Iraq to exporting enough oil to meet human rights and demanding that Baghdad recognise its post-war border with Kuwait.

The Health Ministry said that among the general population, there were 362 cases of polio, 3,627 cases of whooping cough, 1,048 cases of diph-

teria, as well as tens of thousands of cases of measles, tetanus, mumps, cholera, pneumonia and other contagious diseases, all stemming from the hardships caused by the sanctions.

The ministry report said the embargo has seriously hindered medical care available to Iraqis.

It noted that the number of major surgical operations has plummeted from more than 15,000 a year before the sanctions to just over 5,000 in 1993.

Iraqi doctors, the report said, "appeal to all human organisations and societies to seriously demand the lifting of the embargo."

Some of Iraq's depictions of widespread misery have been corroborated by independent sources.

The Rome-based U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation reported last July that U.N. experts have found "pre-famine indicators" in Iraq and warned that the country risked "massive starvation" as the food supply deteriorated.

A 1992 Harvard School of Public Health study commissioned by the U.N. estimated that tens of thousands more children a year were dying compared to before the Gulf war, largely because of outbreaks of diarrhoea.

U.S. expert says democracy is key to Palestinian human rights

By Rosalind Mandline
Murphy

WASHINGTON — A Palestinian governing authority in the West Bank and Gaza "built on a foundation of solid democratic structures" is the sole means for assuring the protection of Palestinian human rights, says Laura Drake, a member of the advisory board of Solidarity International for Human Rights (SIHR).

The active engagement of the Palestinian civil society and a Palestinian decision-making authority that is independent of the Israeli government are two necessary factors for establishing this democratic process, Ms. Drake said.

Ms. Drake, who just returned from a symposium on human rights held in Jerusalem, was reporting on her trip and on the future of Palestinian human rights during a January 6 programme sponsored by the Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine. (SIHR is a non-profit, non-partisan organisation dedicated to promoting global observance of international human rights, covenants and universal values. Ms. Drake is also research director for the Council for the National Interest.)

The lack of discussion of human rights issues in the negotiating process and "continued Israeli abuses" of human rights on the ground, however, hamper efforts to establish a democratic process, according to Ms. Drake. She cautioned that house arrests, restrictions on movement, and increasing violence on the part of Israeli authorities and settlers in Gaza have combined to create "an atmosphere of extreme pessimism."

On the impact of the declaration of principles on

Palestinian human rights, Ms. Drake said the Israel-PLO agreement does not address such human rights questions as political pluralism and freedom of expression. As a result, Palestinian civil society has decided to seize the issue of human rights on its own.

This civil society is "trying to take the issues of human rights and basic civil liberties out of the realm of international negotiation altogether and into the internal domain of (an) intra-Palestinian debate," she explained.

Segments of the Palestinian civil society believe "it is essential that the work of laying the foundations for a democratic state be started immediately" — that is, prior to the advent of a Palestinian interim self-governing authority, Ms. Drake said. While there is still disagreement among the Palestinians on whether to pursue this course of action, those advocating this strategy "seem to be carrying the day," according to the U.S. expert.

These Palestinian advocates of democracy are now consulting with their peers in South African civil society who also are preparing for self-rule. It is they, and not the transitional government of South Africa, who are drafting the new constitution, Ms. Drake noted. "They understood that this was the only way to make sure that the constitution wouldn't be drafted in secret negotiating halls without the participation of the citizens who have to live under it," she said.

"There was no law enabling them to do that... They just asserted the right themselves... and now they are carrying both the leadership and the population right along with them," Ms. Drake said. "Many Palestinian intel-

lectuals," she noted, "are suggesting that their civil society should do the same thing."

If the Palestinian civil society begins "writing some of the rules" for itself — "in consultation with the leadership and (in) full view of the Palestinian citizens" — they will provide the PLO with a new source of strength at the negotiating table, Ms. Drake argued. The PLO negotiators will then have the ability to present the Israelis with their own unique facts on the ground," she said.

One way this strategy could work, she suggested, is by making sure Palestinian elections are held, as stipulated in the declaration of principles. "Many Palestinian intellectuals in the territories fear that the national elections... will eventually be cancelled due to Israeli fears of the growing strength of the Palestinian opposition," she said.

"Instead of passively living with the fear that elections might be cancelled," she said, some intellectuals are advocating preparing for the elections now and "in a very high profile way." This would "create a zero tolerance among the population for any cancellation order that might come about" and thus strengthen the PLO's position against such a cancellation, she said.

Democracy education programmes are a high priority for the Palestinian human rights community right now, Ms. Drake said. These programmes would seek to educate and advise "Palestinians about what their rights as individual citizens should be in the context of political transition." The goal, she said, "is to instill within the society an instinct to insist on a democratic process..." USIA.

Yemeni panel urges national conference

ADEN, Yemen (Agencies) — A committee seeking to reconcile Yemen's divided government has called for the dismantling of illegal military groups in urban areas and proposed a national reconciliation conference.

The committee, grouping representatives from President Ali Abdullah Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC), Vice President Ali Salem Al Beedh's Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) and opposition movements has been meeting since the beginning of January in a bid to resolve the country's five-month political crisis.

The president and his vice-president from the south have been locked in a dispute on how to run the country since August when the latter left the capital to live in the southern port of Aden.

A statement issued by the committee late Friday said a government commission should be formed within two weeks to oversee the reorganisation of security services in the country's major cities, in cooperation with the interior and defence ministries, as well as an end to any armed presence in Yemeni towns.

It said all political parties, associations and religious authorities should participate in the reconciliation conference to put an end to the crisis and to impose law and order.

The committee said revenge killings, a common practice between Yemen's tribal groups, should be banned.

It called for the merging within four months of the armed forces which have remained split despite the uni-

fication of North and South Yemen in May 1990. The issue is a bone of contention between Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beedh.

The statement also backed the government's decision to deport foreigners who do not respect the country's laws, in reference to Muslim fundamentalists from Arab countries operating in Yemen under the protection of local tribes.

The committee's recommendations echoed the reforms urged by the YSP to resolve the crisis. But the two rival leaders have confirmed their support for the recommendations.

The vice-president has linked his return to Sanaa to the implementation of the reforms demanded by his party.

The reconciliation committee also recommended that any troops at the former border which divided North and South Yemen be moved in an attempt to defuse the country's political crisis.

It said any troops at the old border should be redeployed to positions "recommended by a military committee (and) return the situation to how it was before the crisis... in a decision issued in a week and implemented immediately."

Aden, capital of the former South Yemen, has accused Sanaa, capital of the former North Yemen, of placing its forces on full alert and recalling border troops.

An official of the YSP said in December that Sanaa had started resupplying its former border troops with "arms, ammunition and funds."

Yemeni colonel delivers tribe's kidnap demands

DUBAI (Agencies) — Yemeni tribesmen who kidnapped eight people, including a Briton and a Canadian, have released one of their hostages with a list of demands to authorities in Yemen, a diplomat said on Saturday.

Patrick Owens, British consul in Saudi Arabia, said one of those abducted on Monday, a colonel in Yemen's security forces, was sent to the government in Sanaa with the tribe's demands.

"He was allowed to leave the same day. Negotiations are continuing between the authorities and the tribal chiefs for the release of the others," he said by telephone from Riyadh.

He said he did not know what the tribesmen were demanding. Diplomats named the freed hostages as Colonel Abdullah Muharam from Yemen national security.

Mr. Owens identified the Briton as Peter Jackson but declined to give the name of the Canadian. He said both men worked for Hunt Oil.

The six Yemeni hostages refused to accept freedom from their kidnappers in a gesture of solidarity with Mr. Fellow captives, their boss said in Sanaa.

The eight captives, were seized last Monday in the mountainous Marib desert region about 60 kilometres east of Sanaa.

The tribesmen were demanding concessions from the government in return for a Hunt pipeline that runs through their area.

George Slaughter, general manager of the Yemen Hunt Oil Company, said by telephone that the Yemenis "were free to go but they feel a sense of responsibility and they stay."

He added, however, that some had come and gone as intermediaries in negotiations between the tribesmen and Yemeni authorities.

According to Mr. Slaughter, the hostages were kidnapped after flying out to the Marib area check reports of an explosion along the pipeline.

Earlier reports said they had tried to negotiate with the tribesmen over their demands. Mr. Slaughter is also among dozens of expatriate workers taken hostage since 1992 by tribesmen trying to ransom them for government favours.

All were released unhurt, including Slaughter, who was held for nine hours in July 1992.

Clinton to press Yeltsin on arms exports to Iran

BRUSSELS (R) — President Bill Clinton, as part of his campaign against the proliferation of weapons, is expected to press Russian President Boris Yeltsin at their summit next week to end arms sales to Iran, U.S. officials said.

Although Russian arms sales in general have plummeted since the collapse of communism, U.S. officials say preliminary data suggests sales to Iran have risen slightly in the last year. They are most concerned about submarines and tanks.

Mr. Clinton, who will attend a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) summit in Brussels on Monday and Tuesday and then meet Mr. Yeltsin in Moscow, is expected to argue that halting arms sales to Iran would help fulfil a bargain the two leaders struck at their first summit in Vancouver, Canada, last April.

Mr. Yeltsin called then for disbanding Cocom, a regime established by the United States and its Western allies during the cold war to prohibit the transfer of sensitive technologies or weapons to the Warsaw Pact.

Mr. Clinton promised to work towards that goal and recently the allies agreed to phase out the old system by March 1994 and replace it with

a new regime that would make previously prohibited technology available to Russia and other former communist countries while still controlling exports to undesirable states. Russia would be a founding member.

At Vancouver, Mr. Clinton also raised concerns about arms sales to Iran and stressed that being partners in the post-cold war world meant Russia would have to cooperate in halting the spread of destabilising weapons and other technology.

Mr. Yeltsin did not promise to stop the sales "but he indicated that he understood there was a bargain here, being a partner. So what he hopes to do is sell the bargain" during the Moscow summit, a senior U.S. official told Reuters.

"We made good on our bargain — phasing out of Cocom — and now it's time for you to make good on your part and be a responsible partner in trade, in arms around the world and that means the end of arms sales to Iran," he added.

The United States has no diplomatic ties with Iran, which it calls an outlaw state that supports extremist groups. But officials acknowledged it will be difficult and politically risky for Mr. Yeltsin to decide to end arms sales there.

COLUMN

Hong Kong crime at 10-year low in 1993 — police

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong's crime rate fell to a 10-year low last year, making it one of the world's safest cities, the British colony's police chief said Saturday. The overall crime rate dropped 3.4 per cent from 1992 to 1,397 per 100,000 population. The number of murders dropped 20 per cent to 86 in the territory of 3.9 million people. The rate contrasted with 452 murders in the American capital, Washington, a city of 600,000, in 1992. "This low crime rate enables us to continue to lay claim to living in one of the safest cities in the world," Police Commissioner Li Kwun-Ha said in a statement. The number of violent crimes last year fell six per cent, robberies 16 per cent, kidnapping 17 per cent, and rape 11 per cent. Mr. Li also pointed to a drop of 57 per cent in the theft of luxury cars and of 59 per cent in gold shop robberies. "Success in these (two) areas... has been achieved primarily through resolute police vigilance and significantly enhanced cooperation between the Royal Hong Kong Police and our counterparts in China," he said. However, the number of bank robberies jumped 32 per cent to 124 cases last year.

AIDS ad pulled from radio

WASHINGTON (R) — The government withdrew an AIDS prevention radio advertisement featuring the lead singer for Red Hot Chili Peppers after it became known he had been convicted of sexual battery. Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala said she was "outraged" to learn of his background. The ad, featuring singer Anthony Kiedis, was unveiled Monday as part of a public service AIDS prevention campaign featuring eight television and six radio spots. In the ad, Kiedis urges radio audiences to use a condom. "I've been naked on stage... I've been naked whenever I have sex. But now I'm on the radio. So I might as well get naked again... now I'm naked. With a condom... wear a condom if you're gonna have sex. Remember you can be naked without being exposed." In 1990, Kiedis was convicted of sexual battery and indecent exposure stemming from an incident in which he touched a woman's face with his penis. The incident occurred after a concert at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.

Girl wins \$2m award from man who molested her

LOS ANGELES (R) — A 13-year-old girl was awarded more than \$2 million in a civil lawsuit filed against her godfather accusing him of sexually molesting her. In one of the first judgments of its kind, a judge ordered Richard Streat, who had pleaded guilty to molestation and is now in prison, to pay the girl \$1 million in general damages, \$1 million in punitive damages and \$36,000 for medical costs. "The message to those who would abuse children is that children will not be silent and will fight back," said Gloria Allred, the girl's attorney. The 13-year-old had accused Mr. Streat, 30, of molesting her in July 1990 while she was spending the night with his daughter in the Los Angeles suburb of Littlerock and of trying to molest her again when she slept over about a year later. After the second incident, the girl phoned her father, Mr. Streat's closest friend since childhood, and told him what had happened. But when he confronted Mr. Streat with the accusations, he denied it and the father did not press the issue. But the girl's mother, who had been divorced from the father since their daughter was an infant, reported Mr. Streat to local police. Mr. Streat continued to deny the allegations until May 1992, when another girl told police he had sexually abused her. He pleaded guilty to charges involving only the assault on the 13-year-old and was sentenced to three years in prison. In the civil suit, the girl said the sexual abuse drove her into a deep depression, requiring extensive psychological therapy. Mr. Streat did not contest the suit, which was filed in Superior Court in Lancaster in January 1993.

Killed in a... South... Congress... Police... a... South Africa... hospital in... the South Africa... at the hospital... Amha Wame...

Volume 18

Peace dep... stand

USCUS (AP) — Syrian leader Hafez Al Assad's summit with President Bill Clinton, Syria argued on a turnaround... peace... Syria... a... full... in its... the newspaper... Washington... in terms of... and ending...

team fails to... up in Lebanon

UNIT (R) — A... expected to visit... eastern Bekaa... seeking inform... soldiers... failed to... the assist... congressmen would... Damascus to Sul... a small town... Valley where... in 1982 during... in Sultana... in Sultan... sign of the de... (see relat... page 2).

Agency reform... Syria billions

USCUS (R) — newspaper estim... that Syrian... would bring home... in investment... a single currency... round currency... more than... for the... the economic... we are wit... from newspaper... Secretary. The... dollar in a... a second... the dollar is... and private... other rates... to make travel... treatment ab... travel. The b... is at about... 20.

Found in Kuwait

QWAT (AP) — B... Secretary Mal... Sunday... show visit... full Arab states... spokesmen... said the visit... relations... and the of... Mr. Rifkin... and Bahrain... failed to leave... the last leg... Monday.

PLO rejects Arab

DAMASCUS (R) — the Palestinian group... the Palestine... (PLO) with Israel... signed a call by P... Yasser Arafat... the deputy c... from Iran (... of Palestine)... as a "polit...". Abu A...

German was com... by com

DEPNT. German... sentence... as a U.S... to a new... reported that... to life in... for spying... Corps (... the war... whether M... of the... a... in death... up... Wednesday... killed for de...